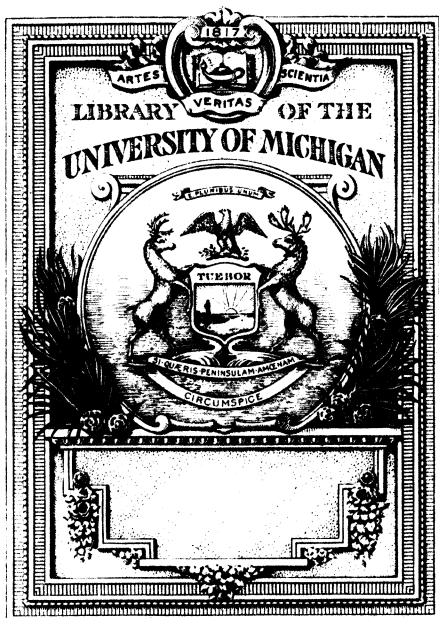


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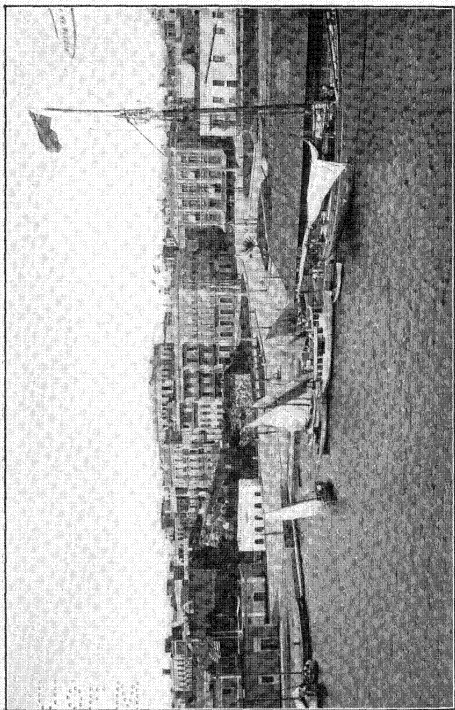
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Down In Porto Rico

BY
GEORGE MILTON FOWLES

REVISED EDITION



NEW YORK
YOUNG PEOPLE'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA
1910

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FOREWORD

THIS book is not a history of Porto Rico. It is intended to give a picture of Porto Rican life as it now exists. To do this it has been necessary to fill in an historical background. The prominent figures, however, are the Porto Ricans of to-day. We spent a year on the Island studying their home life, their personal characteristics, their social, moral, and religious customs, their education, their economic condition, and their efforts at self-government. The writer has enjoyed the hospitality of a number of Porto Rican homes, has formed many warm friendships, and has faith in the ultimate success of the Porto Rican people.

We have not written in a spirit of criticism, neither have we attempted to gloss over imperfections. There has been no attempt made to cover up the mistakes and shortcomings of Porto Ricans, Spaniards, or Americans. Our one aim has been to paint the picture true to life. If this work succeeds in giving its readers a clearer view of conditions "Down in Porto Rico," to the end that they may help to usher in a brighter day to these, our fellow-citizens, we shall feel that we have not labored in vain.

G. M. F.

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL AND HISTORICAL SKETCHES

I. PHYSICAL FEATURES

PORTO RICO is the fourth in size and is the farthest eastward of the larger islands of the West Indies, standing at the gateway to the Caribbean Sea. It is situated between $18^{\circ} 30'$ and $17^{\circ} 55'$ north latitude, and in longitude between 68° and $65^{\circ} 10'$ west from Greenwich. In shape, Porto Rico is almost a rectangle, being about one hundred miles long and about thirty-six miles wide.

The surface is exceedingly broken. With the exception of a small strip of level coast line, the Island consists of a series of hills and valleys. The highest point is in the northeastern part and is called El Yunque. This peak rises about 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In a general way the range of hills extends from east to west through the center of the Island, but it is so broken that it can scarcely be called a continuous range. The valleys all have rivers which vary from tiny rivulets in the dry season to raging torrents during the rainy season.

Surface

The number of rivers vary from forty to sixty, according to the judgment of the geographer in distinguishing between brooks and rivers. Much more rain falls on the northern side than on the southern side of the Island. The trade winds from the east bring moisture, which is precipitated on the northern portion of the Island, thus supplying rain nearly the whole year. On the southern side, there are months at a time when no rain falls and agriculture is carried on by means of irrigation. The Island, therefore, has a wet and dry side rather than a wet and dry season.

Soil

The soil of Porto Rico, as a rule, is very productive, although in many places it has been cultivated so long without fertilization of any kind that it has become quite poor. The north side, owing to the abundance of rain, is well adapted for grazing and for raising crops that require much moisture; while the south side is especially favorable to the growth of sugar cane. One of the anomalous conditions that is observed here is the comparatively small areas that are under cultivation. With an immense population, it would be thought that agriculture would be carried on intensely as in the

crowded parts of Europe. Such, however, is not the case. Although every foot of land is tillable, there is less than one fourth under actual cultivation. Various reasons are given for this state of affairs. The chief ones advanced are as follows: that much of the land is owned by men who live in Spain; that in Porto Rico there is an exceedingly small middle class; that it is almost impossible for the farmer because of his poverty and the smallness of his wage to buy land to cultivate; that the banks hold heavy mortgages on much of the property; that the roads are so bad as to render transportation difficult and very expensive; and that the markets on the Island are not large enough to demand additional produce, while commerce with other countries is not sufficiently regular or profitable to allow the producer to depend upon it. These objections, however, can all be overcome, and there is no good reason why with such fertility of soil, Porto Rico may not some day be a rich and profitable garden plot for the large American cities of the Atlantic Coast.

The coast of Porto Rico has numerous harbors, but none at present that are available for vessels of deep draught. San Juan,

Coast
Line

Guanica and Jobos are landlocked and are considered fine harbors for small vessels. Arecibo, Aguadilla, Mayaguez and Ponce are open roadsteads. These are the principal harbors of Porto Rico, all of which are in need of improvement

Neigh-
boring
Islands

Near the coast of Porto Rico and belonging to it are a number of small islands of more or less importance. The island of Culebra, lying to the eastward, is rocky and barren, but it has a magnificent harbor, capable of sheltering the largest war vessels. It seems to be the intention of the United States naval authorities to use this island as a coaling station and a harbor for vessels.

The island of Vieques, situated southeast of Porto Rico, is quite fertile. It is about twenty-five miles long and seven miles wide. The southern portion of the island is given up largely to producing sugar, while in the northern part the raising of cattle is the chief industry. This little island supports a population of about 7,000 souls .

There are also a number of smaller islands that belong to Porto Rico and are situated quite near its coast. At the entrance to San Juan harbor lies Goat Island, which is

used by the government for a leper colony. This has led to the suggestion that the other islands could be used by the government for prisons, asylums, and various public institutions.

Climate

The climate of Porto Rico is delightful. There is never any cold weather and very few hot days. The thermometer remains quite regularly between sixty-five and eighty-five degrees, but the average change from hottest to coldest is only six degrees. Every day the trade winds blow from the east and moderate the temperature. This sea breeze springs up late in the afternoon and lasts through the evening and into the night. It is delightfully refreshing and enjoyable, but it has a soothing rather than an invigorating effect upon persons. The nights are usually cool and very frequently rain falls.

In the higher elevations the temperature is considered much cooler than along the coast, but nowhere is the heat unbearable. According to the United States Weather Bureau report, the lowest temperature of the day is usually between 5 and 6 A. M. It then rises until 10 A. M., when it remains stationary till about 2 P. M. It then falls

gradually until 5 A. M. of the next day. The month of January has the lowest mean temperature, the month of August the highest mean temperature, but May has the highest temperature of the year. At San Juan, the highest temperature recorded since the Weather Bureau was established was 94° in May, 1903, while the lowest was 65° in March of the same year.

The year is divided into the wet season and the dry season. The former includes the months from April to November, while the latter extends from December to March. The rainfall during the rainy season is 48 to 49 inches, and during the dry season 10 to 11 inches. At no season of the year are there many rainy days. In the afternoon or evenings, without much warning, the rain begins to fall heavily, but the shower is soon over. To the casual observer there is little difference in the weather between the dry season and the wet season. At no time of the year does the rain incommode him to any great extent.

Dengue
Fever

Most Americans, coming as they do from farther north, find the climate of Porto Rico enervating. While they acknowledge the charms of this tropical atmosphere, they

soon long for the invigorating air of the North. Many persons during the time they are becoming acclimated in Porto Rico are subject to attacks of "dengue" fever, which is a sort of malaria known in the South as "break-bone" fever. The experiences of those who are thus afflicted are far from enjoyable, but happily the malady is neither fatal nor of protracted length.

Porto Rico, like all other West India Islands, is subject to occasional hurricanes. These are destructive to life and property and usually work great havoc. The last of these storms occurred August 8, 1899. Over two thousand people lost their lives and the destruction to property was enormous. The towns of Ponce, Arroyo, Humacao and Yabucao suffered the most. The coffee plantations in the interior were ruined, the cane crops along the coast were destroyed, many sugar mills were blown down, fruit trees were uprooted, and, as a result of the storm, famine immediately followed. Had it not been for the prompt aid received from the United States, thousands of other lives would have been lost. These hurricanes, however, are not frequent. During the 400 years of the recorded history

**Hurri-
cane**s

of Porto Rico, there have been six in the sixteenth century, one in the seventeenth century, two in the eighteenth century, and ten in the nineteenth century.¹

II. HISTORICAL SKETCHES

PORTO RICO was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, which left Cadiz September 25, 1493. On the sixteenth of November, the southeastern part of Porto Rico was sighted. The fleet sailed along the southern coast, then up the western shore, and on the nineteenth Columbus landed and planted the cross south of the present town of Aguadilla. This spot is now marked by a granite monument erected by the people in 1893 on the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the Island. The granite is in the form of a cross and bears the following inscription: "1493, 19 de Noviembre, 1893."

A Cap-
tain Ap-
pointed

In 1505, Vicente Yañez Pinzon was appointed Captain of the Island, and was authorized to build a fort there. Pinzon transferred his rights to Martin Garcia de Salazar, while he himself sought larger fields of conquest on the continent.

Ponce
Explores
the
Island

In 1508, Don Juan Ponce de Leon, who had been with Columbus when he landed at Porto Rico, then known as Boriquen, ob-

¹Acosta's Notes to Fray Inigo Abbad's History of Porto Rico.

tained permission from Commander Ovando of La Española, as Santo Domingo was then called, to take a party on an exploring trip to Boriquen, which Columbus had named San Juan Bautista.

Ponce fitted out a vessel with a few followers and some Indians as guides and interpreters. He called at the island of Mona, which was then inhabited by Indians, and made friends with them. From here he sailed to the island of San Juan. Ponce and his men were well received by the natives, who entered into bonds of friendship with them. Ponce then requested the chief to show him where they found the yellow metal from which they made disks. An Indian pointed out the auriferous sands of several rivers, and Ponce took with him some samples of the gold found there. The exploring expedition continued until it came to the Bay of San Juan. Here Ponce left some of his companions to lay the foundations of a town, while he returned to La Española to report his voyage and test his samples of gold. The gold was not as fine as that found in La Española, but it was still considered valuable.

The
First
Settle-
ment

Ponce soon returned to San Juan, where he assisted in building the town of Caparra on the bay facing the present site of the capital. This town retained its original site and name until 1521, when by royal order it was transferred to the present situation and the name changed to Porto Rico. Later the whole Island became known as Porto Rico and the town was called San Juan.

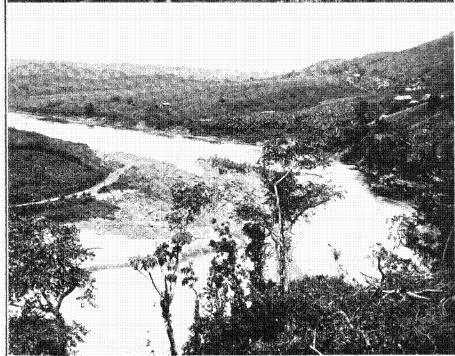
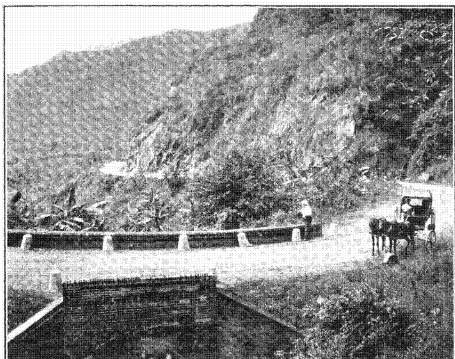
Diego
Columbus

Ponce was not permitted to remain in control of San Juan for any great length of time. Diego Columbus claimed the right to rule the island by virtue of the discovery made by his father. In this he was sustained by the King of Spain in 1511, and Ponce delivered his office to Juan Ceron and withdrew to his own residence in Caparra.

Indian
Rebellion

During the time Ponce was governor of San Juan, his followers scattered all through the island in search of gold. They compelled the Indians to wash the river sands for gold and proved themselves hard taskmasters.

The Indians were further degraded and practically reduced to slavery by a system of "distribution" by which they were assigned to the settlers in various numbers. The Indians resented this, but they still be-



LANDSCAPE VIEWS

Military Road Near Guayama
A River Scene



lieved that their oppressors were supernatural beings, and hence they were afraid to oppose them. They had this illusion dispelled in the following manner: One of their number volunteered to carry a young Spaniard across a stream. When they reached the deepest part, the native threw him into the water and held him down until he drowned. By this act they learned that the Spaniards were subject to death. This was a signal for a general rebellion which continued until the death of the chief Guaybana. Left without a leader, the Indians soon subsided into their former condition of servitude.

In 1544, the King of Spain ordered the Indians to be set free, but it was too late — the race had perished. The number of Indians in Porto Rico when the Spaniards first arrived has been variously estimated from 16,000 to 600,000. When the Bishop of San Juan, in 1544, reported how many had been set free by royal proclamation, he said that the total number affected, including men, women and children, was sixty.

With the rapid extinction of the Indians, the output of gold decreased until the settlers in desperation bought negroes on

**A Doomed
Race**

**Negroes
Introduced**

credit in the hope of discovering new deposits. In 1534 news came of the wonderful riches of Peru and Mexico, and the island was almost depopulated. The governor imposed the death penalty upon any one who should attempt to leave, but, notwithstanding threats and punishments, the inhabitants nearly all succeeded in getting away from the island.

**Internal
Disorder**

From this date until the close of the century, Porto Rico was in constant turmoil from foes within and without. The few Spaniards who remained quarreled about the forms of government. The negro slaves had in many instances withdrawn to the hills and forests from which they made incursions upon their old masters.

**Attacks
From
Without**

In addition to these troubles, the island was in a defenseless condition and was harassed by pirates and privateers. In 1595, the English under Drake made an attack upon the island, but a Spanish fleet sent to convoy some merchantmen carrying gold to the King happened to be in the harbor of San Juan and compelled the English fleet to withdraw. Two years later the English under Lord Cumberland landed at what is now called Santurce and took possession of

the capital. Dysentery and yellow fever wrought such havoc among the troops that the English commander was obliged to leave the island.

In 1625, a Dutch fleet of seventeen vessels appeared in the harbor of San Juan and took the city; but after a siege of one month, in which they failed to take the fort, they sailed away, having lost their general, one of their largest vessels, and four hundred men.

During the rest of the seventeenth century, Porto Rico was at war with privateers, freebooters and pirates who infested the West Indies and preyed upon Spanish commerce. England, France and Holland furnished most of these, and as Spain was at war with these nations at home and was being defeated by them, she had not the force to spare for the defence of Porto Rico, and the islanders had to shift for themselves.

In 1702, the English attacked Arecibo, but were forced to re-embark. In 1703, they landed in the neighborhood of San German, but were again compelled to return to their vessels. Other attacks were made by them in 1743 near Ponce, and in 1797, upon the capital, but they were not successful.

At this late date, the beginning of the nineteenth century, Porto Rico had a population of only 155,426. Owing largely to the smuggling custom then in vogue, these people were unable to pay the expenses of the government, and \$100,000 annually had to be sent from Mexico to make up the deficit.

Immigra-
tion En-
couraged

In 1815, a royal proclamation was issued known as "Regulations for promoting the population, commerce, industry and agriculture of Puerto Rico." Foreigners were invited to the Island, rights of Spanish citizenship were promised them, land was granted them free of all expenses, they were to be exempt from export duties on their products and from import duties on agricultural implements, negro slaves could be brought into the country without restriction, and free trade between Spain and her possessions was to be in force for fifteen years.

This decree attracted many colonists from the French and English Antilles. They came with capital, with slaves, with agricultural knowledge, and their influence in Porto Rico did much to improve economic conditions here. The population was

further increased by emigrants from Hayti, Santo Domingo, Venezuela and other places where war drove out many of the inhabitants who desired a land of peace.

This order marked the beginning of a new life in Porto Rico. From the discovery of the Island to 1778, immigration was restricted to Spaniards. At that date Catholic workmen of other nations were granted admittance, but in 1815 the doors were opened to all. This was restricted somewhat the following year by requiring those who had not gained a residence to depart from the Island, but great good had already been accomplished by the large influx of foreigners. During the remainder of the nineteenth century there was a steady increase in population and comparatively little war.

New Con-
ditions

In 1825, a body of enthusiastic Colombians, under Simon Bolivar, landed near Aguadilla with the intention of helping the Porto Ricans to throw off the Spanish rule as they themselves had done. The people, however, did not respond to this army of liberation, and the Spaniards compelled them to withdraw and the enterprise was abandoned. The next disturbance was in

Later
Disturb-
ances

1868. About 800 men met at Lares and set up the Republic of Boriquen. After a few days of enthusiasm, the army of the Republic dwindled to two or three hundred men who were finally put to flight by about a dozen militiamen.

Emancipa-
tion of
Slaves

An event of importance occurred on March 22, 1873. This was a decree by the Republican government of Spain giving freedom to all negro slaves in Porto Rico. By this proclamation, 34,000 persons were released from the bonds of slavery.

The last fifteen years of Spanish rule in Porto Rico was characterized by many acts of persecution. Men of education who advocated liberal ideas were thrown into prison, or exiled, or tortured. Persons belonging to secret societies whose purposes were supposed to be disloyal were arrested by the civil guard and subjected to severe tortures. Not only were suspected men maimed, but in many instances, they were killed by instruments of torture.

In 1896, the government instituted more liberal laws in deference to public opinion of other nations, especially of the United

States. On November 25, 1897, a royal decree was signed granting autonomy to Porto Rico.

Spain, however, was too late in introducing her reforms. The Island was declared in a state of war by the governor-general on April 21, 1898, and on July 25, Porto Rico became a part of the United States.

III. WHO ARE THE PORTO RICANS?

WHEN the Spaniards discovered Porto Rico, they found the Island inhabited by a copper-colored race, who, in common with the natives of the other West Indies and of the continent, became known as Indians. While those of Porto Rico resembled the Indians of the continent in the color of the skin, in the prominent cheek bones, and in the long, coarse hair, they differed from them in many respects. The Indian of the continent was a large, raw-boned, warlike savage, who delighted in hunting and fighting. The Indian of Porto Rico was short in stature, stout, peaceful and indolent. He is described as having a flat nose, poor teeth, dull eyes, narrow forehead, and a skull artificially fashioned into the shape of a cone. Most of his time was spent in a hammock

The Aborigines

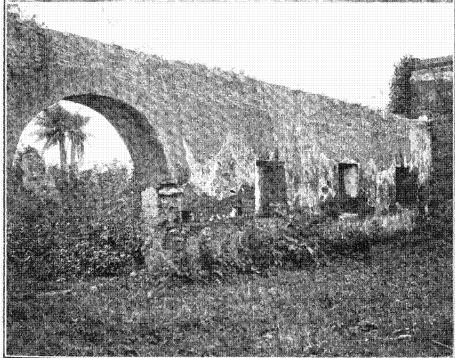
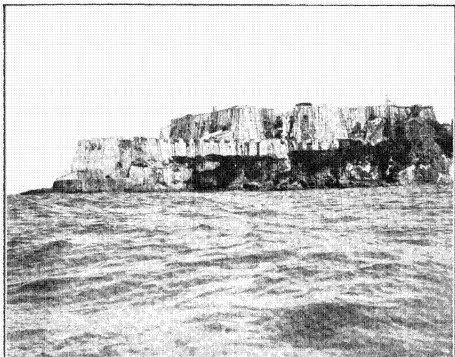
made from the bark of trees. Unlike the Indian of the North, he cared little for flesh foods and lived chiefly on vegetables. His place of abode was a hut built of sugar cane which had one opening only. Thus having a permanent hut instead of a movable wigwam, he was more established in his residence than the Indian of the continent. He was like him, however, in wearing very little clothing, in painting his body, in decorating his hair with feathers, in belonging to a tribe whose ruler was called the chief.

Mixture
of Span-
ish and
Indian
Blood

These were the people that Ponce found when he came to explore the Island in 1508. Spanish blood began to mingle with Indian blood from the very first. Ponce won the friendship of the powerful chief Guaybana, and in order to strengthen this bond, he married the sister of the chief. His example was followed by many other Spaniards in those early days, since there were few Spanish women in Porto Rico for many years after this event. As a result, a new race appeared, ethnologically known as Mestizos, the children of Spanish men and Indian women.

Negro
and
Indian

In 1513, negro slavery was authorized and the slaves introduced were chiefly males.



PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST

El Morro at San Juan
Ruins of Caparra



As the Indians were practically slaves also, and worked side by side with the negro, another mixture of blood took place, and the Zambos, the children of negro men and Indian women, appeared.

Still
Another
Mixture

When the negro women and later the white women came to the Island, a still further admixture took place. For the first three hundred years, however, there seem to have been comparatively few white women on the Island.

The
White
Popula-
tion

The white population during this period consisted of government officials who rarely brought their families with them, the government troops, convicts who had served their sentences in the forts, adventurers and pirates who were looking for wealth, and the merchants who controlled the commerce of the Island. It was not until the "Act of Grace" in 1815 brought emigrants and their families from the French and English Antilles, and from Santo Domingo and Venezuela, that there began to be a permanent white element in the population. Since that date there has been some immigration, but as no official record has been kept, it is impossible to find out how large the number

has been. The following statistics show that the large increase of population both by immigration and natural increase has been made during the nineteenth century. They also show the relative percentages of white and colored persons, according to their own statements.

Date	Total Pop.	White	Colored	Percentage	
				White	Colored
1802	163,192	78,281	84,911	48	52
1812	183,014	85,662	97,352	46.8	53.2
1820	230,622	102,432	128,190	44.4	55.6
1827	302,672	150,311	162,361	49.7	50.3
1830	323,838	162,311	161,527	50.1	49.9
1836	357,086	188,869	168,217	52.9	47.1
1860	583,308	300,406	282,775	51.5	48.5
1877	731,648	411,712	319,936	56.3	43.7
1887	798,565	474,933	323,632	59.5	40.5
1897	980,911	573,187	317,724	64.3	35.7
1899	953,243	589,426	363,817	61.8	38.2

White
Popula-
tion

From this it would seem that the white population has been from 44.4 per cent to 64.3 per cent of the whole population from the year 1802 to 1899. All through the history of Porto Rico many white men married or brought up children with creole or even black women. The color line has been

largely disregarded. It is only reasonable to suppose that many persons of mixed blood have been classed as "whites" in the census.

This view is reinforced by the results of an investigation into the white population of the present day. The census of 1899 gives the whites 61.8 per cent of the whole population, yet one who passes through the Island and notices all the shades from white to black, knows that this cannot be true. There is evidently a minority of the inhabitants who do not show traces of negro or Indian blood. In an investigation which the writer made in San Juan in the present year, 1904, of a number of white families considered among the best of the city, it was discovered that more than 60 per cent. had colored blood in their veins, yet in the census all were counted as whites. In conversing with prominent men who are well acquainted with the people in all parts of the Island, they have given estimates of the proportion of whites which range from 25 per cent to 40 per cent. The census, no doubt, is true so far as it has recorded the answers of the people, but it must be remembered that a Porto Rican must have

strong distinctive marks of negro ancestry before he is willing to acknowledge that he is not white.

We believe that the present population is very largely an amalgamation of white, black and Indian blood. Mr. Salvador Brau seems to have a like opinion, for he states in his book, "Puerto Rico y su Historia," that the Porto Ricans of to-day have inherited the following characteristics from their ancestors: "Indolence, taciturnity, sobriety, disinterestedness and hospitality from the Indian; physical endurance, sensualism and fatalism from the negro; and love of display, love of country, independence, devotion, perseverance and chivalry from the Spaniard."

The whites, therefore, of Porto Rico must be considered in an entirely different sense from European and North American whites. They represent a genus of their own, the Porto Rican whites.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOMES OF THE PEOPLE

I. DWELLINGS OF THE POOR

IN Porto Rico, as in the United States, there are great differences in modes of living, dependent upon the place of the home and the economic condition of the occupants. We shall discuss the homes under two heads: the homes of the poor and the homes of the higher classes. Among the poor, there is the life in the "patios" of the larger cities, in the shanties of the suburbs, in the smaller towns and villages, at the "haciendas" or plantations, and in the country.

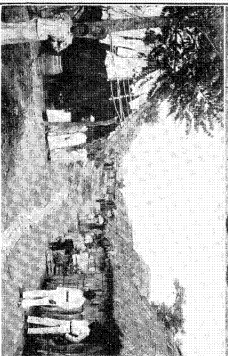
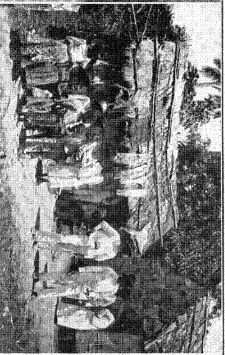
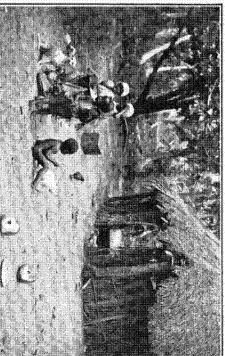
There are no great cities on the Island, only two, San Juan and Ponce, having a population of over 30,000, and neither of these exceeds 45,000. In the minds of the Islanders, however, San Juan is a great metropolis, and they speak of "La Capital" in much the same way as Americans refer to New York. San Juan has always been as it is now, the chief commercial port. The frequent attacks upon it by pirates and by hos-

San Juan

tile powers at war with Spain early demanded fortifications. In 1533, the construction of El Morro was begun in order to guard the entrance into the harbor. In 1630 was begun the wall which completely enclosed the city. Early in the eighteenth century, the construction of San Cristobal was begun to guard the city on the landward side.

The islet of San Juan is almost three miles long and one half mile wide, but less than one-third of this area lies within the city walls. This has compelled the inhabitants to live in crowded quarters. There are probably not a dozen detached houses in the city. The buildings are all constructed of brick and stone covered with plaster or cement. On the principal streets most of these are two stories high, with an occasional three-story house, and perhaps a half dozen that are four stories high. On the less important streets, the one-story type prevails. The whole city is a solid mass of masonry. There are no vacant lots or breathing places and no back yards. The two chief plazas or squares of the city are the Plaza Baldorioty at the center of the

Narrow
City
Limits



DWELLINGS OF THE POOR

A Country Shack
A Village Street

A Suburban Shanty
A City Patio

city, and the Plaza Colon on the eastern side, adjoining San Cristobal. These are both quite small and are cemented.

To give an idea of home life in this city, it is necessary to describe a typical two-story house. On the second floor, the large front room, usually extending the full width of the house, is the parlor, which has the only outside openings of the building. These are called windows, but in reality they are double doors with full-length shutters. There is no such thing as glass windows in Porto Rico, except a few that have been introduced by Americans. Adjoining the parlor are one or two bedchambers and a dining-room into which the stairs lead. The width of the house from the dining-room to the kitchen at the rear is about equally divided between an inner court or "patio" and bedrooms. The hallway is a corridor outside the wall, overlooking the court, and is either entirely open on this side or has lattice work to protect it. The kitchen and a small room leading into it occupy the same relative position at the rear of the court as the dining-room and bedrooms do at the front of it. As there are no spaces between buildings, the rear of the

A Typi-
cal House

house touches the rear of the one adjoining, and thus prevents either light or ventilation from that direction. The only openings to any of these rooms are the large double doors which open into the court. When these are closed, the inmates have neither light nor ventilation, except, as in some cases, a door opens into the adjoining room, or a little pane of glass has been built in the flat roof and furnishes a few rays of light.

The general plan of a house is an oblong from thirty to forty feet wide and from 125 to 150 feet deep, with a court about one half the width and two thirds the length cut out of one side.

**Life in
Patio**

The plan of the lower floor is similar to that of the upper except when it is used as stores. Then the space as far back as the court or "patio" is used as a store, and the rooms opening into the court are rented to families. In these "patios" we find filth and poverty that cannot be described. Each of the small dark rooms, with no opening except a door, and that admitting only the foul air of an overcrowded and dirty court, is the home of a family sometimes numbering a dozen persons. There is little or no

furniture in the room. Where they all sleep is a problem! In some of the rooms there is a tier of berths along the side, but in many cases the children sleep on the bare floor, disputing this space with rats, roaches and fleas. There is no need for a table, because they have no regular time for meals. They eat when they feel like it if they are able to procure food, otherwise they go hungry. Almost any hour of the day you can see adults and children chewing a piece of dry bread, or a stick of sugar cane, or eating fruit in a more or less advanced state of decay. If they should want a fire to warm water or prepare food, they buy a few cents' worth of charcoal, put it into one of the rectangular oil cans that have become such a universal utility article throughout the Island, place a kettle upon the coals, and the kitchen is complete. It is hardly necessary to state that these improvised stoves are not in the rooms, but in the "patio."

A view of these "patios" gives impressions that cannot be forgotten. An inner court perhaps forty or fifty feet long and fifteen or twenty feet wide; several lines filled with clothes that have just been hung up to dry

and incidentally to limit the light and air of the enclosed yard; a number of dirty, naked babies of all ages up to six or seven years; lazy men sitting against the side of the house, asleep or talking to their neighbors; women with but a single garment on, and that very filthy, either washing or cooking, or sitting on the ground, and like the men gossiping and smoking some cigar stumps they have picked up in the streets; boys and girls with scarcely enough clothing to cover their nakedness running errands, quarreling among themselves, and following quickly in the footsteps of their parents in helping to increase the population of the Island; odors of all kinds, the garlic and onions of the cook, the tobacco fumes from the smokers, the fetid atmosphere caused by the filth strewed about on the ground, and the exhaustion of the oxygen caused by the many inhabitants, are merely suggestions of the unsanitary condition of the homes, of the squalor, filth and abject poverty of the thousands who live in the "patios" of the city.

**Suburban
Shanties**

We pass from the city to the suburbs. Near San Juan there is a stretch of marshy land facing the bay. Here are built several

large villages composed entirely of shanties placed close to each other. The frame work of these dwellings is square timber when it can be obtained, but more often poles answer the purpose. The siding is varied according to the ability of the owner to secure materials. Occasionally it is all made of new lumber. Oftener it is made up of old boards that have been picked up, store boxes that have been taken apart, tin cans that have been straightened out, advertising signs of either tin or wood, and, in many cases, the bark of the palm tree or the leaves of the sugar cane are used. For a roof, discarded pieces of corrugated iron or tin or boards are made to do service, but frequently thatch is used. When the ground is marshy, the buildings are elevated on posts and a floor is built as rapidly as boards enough can be secured for that purpose.

These shanties have usually one or two rooms. When there are two, the partition is very often made of canvas or some other cheap material. In the front room, the chief article of furniture is a hammock, in which the man of the house spends much of his time. Children abound, and the little naked youngsters are everywhere in evi-

dence. The kitchen is the same open-air-charcoal-oil-can arrangement that has been previously noted. Many of the women earn money by washing for persons in the city, and almost any hour of the day they can be seen going to and from the city with their bundle of clothes carefully poised on the head.

Life in the shanties is in some respects an improvement over that in the "patio." Here they have at least the fresh air from the sea. This is indicated by the very suggestive name of one village, "The North Pole." On the other hand, they live in these marshes, where there is no drainage and no sewers. All the filth and excrements mingle with the marshy soil which sends forth its poisonous gases to be inhaled by the people. The name of another of these villages, "Venice," gives a strong suggestion of its watery surroundings.

The conditions that obtain among the poor of the "patios," and of these conglomerate shanties of the marsh, are more local than general in their character, and are found chiefly in San Juan and vicinity. Our further description of the homes will

apply almost equally well to all the other towns and villages of the Island.

The general plan of the Porto Rican town is a central plaza, facing which the Catholic Church is the most imposing structure. The public buildings, if there are any, are on this square, and the chief stores and hotels are here also. Away from the plaza and its immediate vicinity, nearly all the houses are detached. While in every town there are many comfortable and a few elegant houses, the great majority are cheap, little cottages and tumble-down shacks. In many of the villages, the Catholic Church is the only substantial building to be seen, the rest being little wooden structures or thatched cottages. These houses are built in very much the same way as those described before. The materials used are seldom new, and the completed dwelling, with its leaky roof, uneven floor and scanty furniture, is far from attractive or comfortable. It would seem, however, that life among the poor of the smaller towns and villages is not attended by so many disadvantages and distressing conditions as are found among those of the larger cities.

Village
Life

Life on
the Plan-
tations

At a few of the large plantations, the lot of the poor is hard. They are not much better than slaves. The owner or some of his friends or relatives keep a store where prices are high and quality poor, but by force of circumstances the employee must buy his goods there. He is usually in debt, and the employer's coupons are good only at the store. For this reason, he is unable to release himself from his bondage. At some of these estates, the people are herded together like cattle. A long, narrow, shed-like building is constructed, divided into small rooms, each of which is rented to a family. These people are perhaps among the most unhappy of the Island, for while their poverty may not be so severe, they feel themselves in the hands of a master.

Rural
Shacks

The homes of the poor peasants are much the same all through the country. The houses are built of poles for the frame, palm bark or leaves of the sugar cane for the sides, and the roof made of thatch from the sugar cane. Sometimes they rest upon posts two or three feet from the ground, but often are built upon the ground so that no floor other than the earth is needed. This usually contains but one or two rooms—a

bedroom and a sitting-room. In the sitting-room is the ever popular hammock. Frequently a box or two does duty as chairs, but usually when the inmates want to sit down, they use the floor. The bedroom sometimes contains a platform which serves as a bed for the whole family.

The peasant and his family live out of doors most of the time, and while they are extremely poor, they do not suffer much from actual hunger. The constant vegetable diet, however, has the effect of weakening the system and causing much ill-health. The annual expense for clothing the family is very light. The children need absolutely nothing till they are seven or eight years old. None of the family wear shoes. They make their own hats, and all that needs to be bought is a little cotton cloth to cover the nakedness of the older members of the family.

This, in brief, is a description of the homes of the poorer classes of Porto Ricans, as seen in city, suburb, plantation, village and country. And in these homes are found about three fourths of the entire population of the Island.

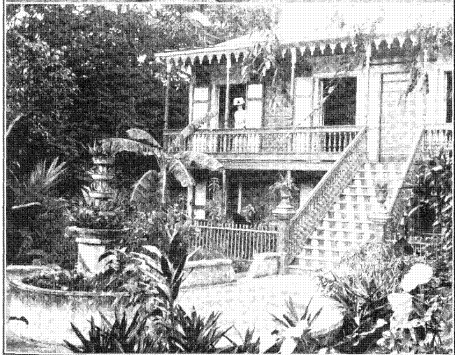
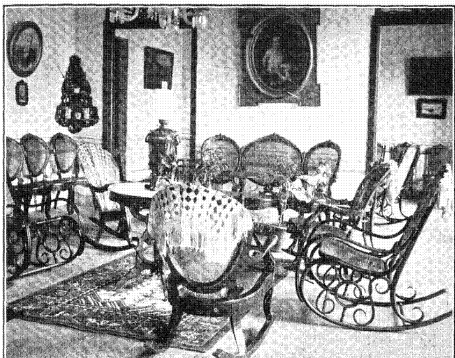
II. HOUSES OF THE HIGHER CLASSES

The Parlor

IN San Juan few of the houses are detached. The front walls come out flush with the sidewalk and form a continuous wall from street to street. On the second floor a narrow balcony is built out over the sidewalk, which is rarely ever more than four feet wide. On the first floor the lower part of the windows, which extend to the floor, have an iron railing to protect the parlor from the street. The whole room, however, is exposed to the gaze of the passers-by when the shutters are open, which is of necessity most of the time, to admit light and air.

The higher class people occupy the second floors, and in some cases, they are found on the first floor, but this is not the rule. Entering one of these homes, we find that the material used for flooring is usually tiling for the parlor, dining-room and kitchen, wood for the bedrooms, and cement or tiling for the halls.

The parlor is the chief room of the house. This is used quite generally as the living-room of the family, and most of the furniture of the house is found here. Portieres commonly hang before each door and win-



RESIDENCES OF THE HIGHER CLASS

Interior of a San Juan Home
A Suburban House



dow of the parlor. There seems to be a uniform mode of arrangement of parlor furniture in all these homes. A center table with a marble top is found in the middle of the room. On either side of this table, and facing it, are several large armchairs and rocking chairs. Close against the four sides of the room, the small chairs and the sofa are placed. All these have cane backs and bottoms. The furniture is either carved mahogany, which has been brought from Spain, or a style of bent wood painted black, which has been imported from Austria, or the cheaper woods which are also painted black, this being the popular color for furniture. Sometimes there are corner pieces, and also large mirrors in finely wrought frames, or little carved tables with marble tops made to set against the wall. The whole arrangement is in lines running parallel or at right angles to each other. The large number of chairs, and the stiff conventional manner of arranging them, are the most striking features of a Porto Rican parlor.

The ample dining-room contains the table, the chairs, and a large sideboard to hold the numerous dishes used at dinner time. The

The Dining
Room

different meals are about the same as on the continent of Europe. Bread and coffee in the morning, meat breakfast between eleven and twelve, and dinner about six or seven in the evening. Dinner is the one full meal of the day. It has quite an elaborate menu which is served in courses. Soup, fritters, two or three kinds of meat, rice, red beans, salads, dessert, fruit, coffee and wine is an average dinner. There is no fixed order in the serving of the courses so that one is not sure what article of food comes next. Most of the food is quite greasy and is strongly flavored with onions and garlic. There is a marked sameness in the bill of fare week after week. The food seems to be wholesome and indigestion is not a common complaint. At the close of the meal, the male members of the family light their cigarettes or cigars, while all remain around the table and join in conversation. The use of tobacco, which is quite general among the poorer classes of women, is not indulged in to any great extent by those of the better classes.

The Bed Rooms

Passing from the dining-room to the bedrooms, we find in each of them a high iron bedstead with a mosquito netting across the

top. This is tucked up through the day and let down at night. The coverings of the bed are the sheets and a counterpane. The sleeper rests either upon a canvas stretched across the bedstead, or upon a wire mattress with a covering not sufficiently thick to prevent the wires from leaving an impression upon the body. Carpets are practically unknown in Porto Rico, but a small rug usually lies in front of the bed. There is a mahogany wardrobe, which takes the place of closets, which are not used here, and a dresser, which adds much to the appearance and comfort of the room. There is also a small table upon which rests some religious emblem, as the image of the Virgin Mary or the crucifix. The only means of ventilation in these rooms is the door, and this is frequently kept closed during the night for the Porto Rican is afraid of a draught, and especially so of the night air.

In the kitchen, the most interesting feature is the great tile construction which extends across the side of the room and is used for cooking purposes. It is about three feet high, and two or three feet wide. In the top of it are a number of square holes into which gratings fit to hold the charcoal used

The Kitchen

in cooking. The number of these holes makes it possible for the cook to prepare several dishes at the same time. Extending over the entire range, in the form of an inverted funnel divided perpendicularly, is the large flue or chimney to conduct the heat of the fire and the odors from the cooking food to the air above.

**The Bath
Room**

The bath and toilet rooms are modern innovations that have come with the water works and sewers. The use of them is still comparatively limited, and there is much room for improvement in this direction. The old bath tubs were made after the Roman style. Huge vessels built of brick, cemented inside and covered with tile on the outside, or in some cases they were hewn out of marble. The modern porcelain tub is the one now being installed.

**Homes Out-
side of the
City**

The homes of the well-to-do classes in the small towns and in the country are similar to the one just described, in their furnishings and the arrangement of them. They differ largely, however, in the construction and general appearance of the houses. Some are built of brick and cemented outside and inside, but more are wooden structures with light board partitions between the rooms,

and all the walls painted. In the case of the brick buildings, the more important partitions are built of brick, and the others are of plaster. All of these partitions are given a lime wash. Wall paper is little used.

The houses are one or two stories high, a balcony in front which is sometimes built around the side, large window openings extending to the floor and closed by double shutters. There are no glass windows. Sometimes a pane of glass is found built in the roof, or placed at the top of a shutter, or over a door, but such cases are rare.

Where there is room, the yard in front of the house is divided into flower beds in which grow large tropical bushes which either by their variegated foliage or the abundance of their flowers, give a most pleasing effect to the appearance of the home. While there are quite a number of these houses scattered throughout the Island, they are remarkably few for so large a population. Perhaps the principal reason why there are so few elegant residences is the fact that most of the wealth has always been in the hands of the Spaniards, and they have regarded Porto Rico as a place to make money and afterward to spend it in Spain.

The few Porto Ricans who became wealthy also thought of Spain or France as a place to seek pleasure rather than to spend their money in beautifying their homes on the Island. Thus the money secured here has been spent largely in Europe, while Porto Rico has been regarded as a place for temporary residence.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS

I. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE modern Porto Ricans are short in stature, slender in figure, graceful in motion, animated in conversation, quick in action, and, with the exception of the pure whites and the pure blacks, they are brown-skinned, due to the mixture of white, negro and Indian blood.

The color of the hair is black, and varies from straight to kinky, according to the amount of negro blood in the veins.

Character-
istics

The teeth are exceedingly poor. Whether this is due to the chewing of cane, the acids of the fruits, the eating of sweets, the excessive use of tobacco, the results of immorality or the inheritance of generations of ancestors likewise affected, cannot be definitely stated. The lack of good teeth is almost universal. Among the higher classes, this defect is remedied to some extent by the skill of the dentist, but large numbers of the people have the front teeth out, or a stray tooth perhaps left, or several incisors or

canines in a bad state of decay. The absence of front teeth or the poor condition of the ones remaining is the most disfiguring feature of the average Porto Rican.

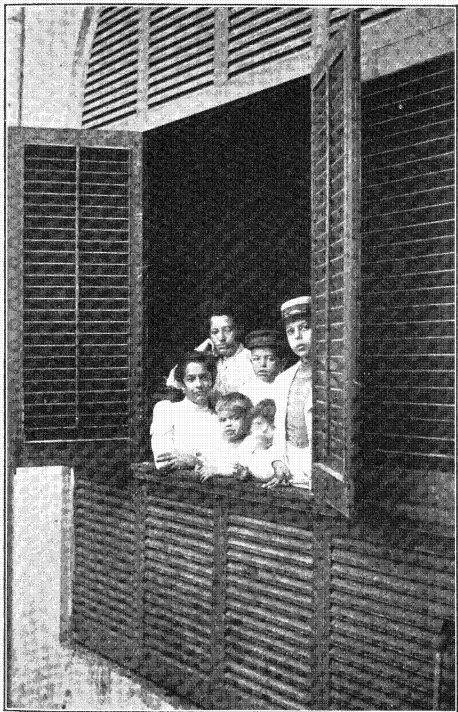
Lack of
Nourishing
Food

Being small in body, neither men nor women have much muscular strength, but when they are so inclined, or when occasion demands it, they have considerable power of endurance. The lack of nourishing food is largely responsible for this weakened condition of the body. The peasant lives on rice and salt fish chiefly and rarely tastes fresh meat of any kind. In thousands of cases the only time he has fresh meat is at Christmas when he roasts the little razor-backed pig that has been raised for this occasion. Add to this fact the unsanitary condition of living, and it can be readily understood why the country people have so much sickness among them.

Physical
Disability

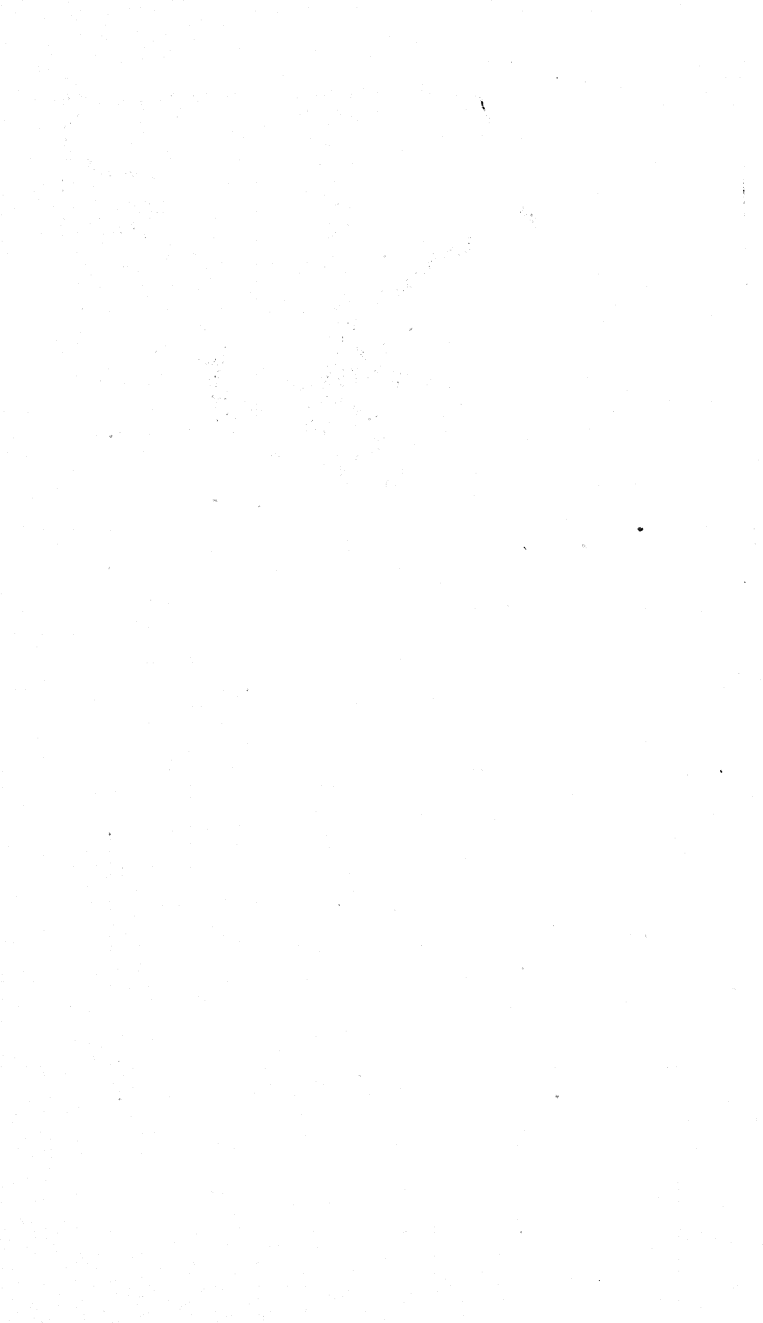
In an article on anæmia, written in the spring of 1904, Dr. Stahl, a well-known Porto Rican physician, makes this statement:

“Out of the million inhabitants of Porto Rico, it is calculated that at least three fourths live in the country and that more than 95 per cent. of these are sick with Un-



A PORTO RICAN FAMILY





cinariasis. Out of the remaining 250,000 found in the cities and larger towns nearly half that number, constituting the poor of the suburbs and by-streets, also suffer from this disease. In short, more than 800,000 inhabitants of Porto Rico are suffering from so terrible a plague, and its consequences are more or less manifest and disastrous.

“In the country districts, I except only the children at the breast; among the adults we can hardly find one free from infection. In the colored man, the deeper his color the less exposed is he to contract the infection and the infection does not attack his organism with such intensity as it does with the white man.

“Let us admit that of the 800,000 infected, half are light cases for some reason or other; there are left 400,000 anæmics that cannot conscientiously be considered light cases. Of these, one half, 200,000 are included in that circle in which 100,000 can be considered grave cases and 50,000 very grave, really helplessly ill, incapacitated from all kind of physical and mental labor. These not being able to work and earn their bread, and their near relatives lacking the means of sustaining them, dedicate themselves to

begging, and at times even this work is too great for their strength and they die worn out by their disease and their hunger."

The government has taken this matter in hand and is making an investigation of the conditions that exist here. An anæmic camp was established at Bayamon and later removed to Utuado. Dr. Ashford of the United States Navy has charge of this camp, and the results of this investigation are not yet known. While visiting Utuado in July of 1904, I learned that about four thousand patients were being treated weekly. With the introduction of sanitary measures, the knowledge of how to cure the prevalent diseases, the teaching of physiology and hygiene in the public schools, there will undoubtedly follow a better state of health.

Diseases

Another cause of physical debility is found in the widespread immorality of the people. Venereal diseases are exceedingly common.

A physician of San Juan told me that in his large practice, he was surprised to discover how many persons were suffering as a result of either their own or their parents' immoral acts. This is seen in the many forms of skin diseases that are so prevalent

here. The faces of many are marred by eruptions and irritations that point to ancestral excesses. We refer to this phase of life at this point because of its physical results; in a later chapter, we shall deal more fully with the question in considering moral conditions.

Another cause that acts disastrously upon the physical life of the Porto Rican is the constant and almost universal use of rum and tobacco. The boys, and sometimes the girls, learn to use tobacco at an early age. As tobacco is grown here and is easily procured, the use of it is quite general among the men and boys of all classes, and among the women of the lower classes. This has the effect of impeding the growth and preventing a full physical development. The use of rum is widespread also. While comparatively few drink to the point of intoxication, there is a constant tippling that is injurious to the system. Many times it is used to destroy the pangs of hunger. The poor very often find it easier to get a little tobacco and rum than to secure a good, nourishing meal.

Rum and
Tobacco

We would ascribe, therefore, as the cause

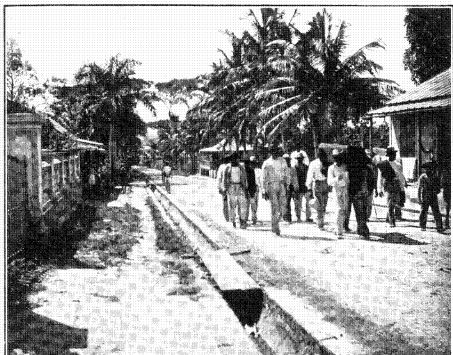
of much of the physical debility that is so prevalent among the Porto Ricans, to lack of proper food, unsanitary modes of living, results of immorality, and the widespread use of tobacco and rum.

II. MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE Porto Ricans being chiefly of Spanish descent or having been closely associated with Spaniards, have many of the general characteristics of the Latin race.

They are impulsive, excitable, talkative, demonstrative. On the streets, in the stores, in the homes, they talk in loud tones accompanied by many varied and suggestive gesticulations. The movements of the hands and arms, the expression of the countenance, the positions of the body, the inimitable shrug of the shoulders, enable the listener to understand much of the conversation without hearing a word. With their naturally excitable nature, it is almost impossible for them to wait until one person finishes speaking, but several, and sometimes the whole company, are talking at once.

In the plazas where they gather in groups of two or more, instead of a quiet friendly conversation, you soon hear every group



DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD

A Funeral Procession

Bone Heap in San Juan Cemetery



talking in high and loud tones, so that the plaza usually sounds like a school yard where the children have just been given a recess. The habit of giving immediate expression to their thoughts has become so fixed that frequently one hears persons as they walk along the streets talking aloud to themselves.

In public speech, the orator is usually verbose. The Spanish language is rich in adjectives, and there are a number of ways in which the speaker can express the same thought in different words, most of which he feels obliged to use. Thus an orator is enabled to pronounce a great many words in an address without the necessity of furnishing many ideas. Verbose

The Porto Rican is extremely fond of the spectacular. This is manifested in the gaudy wearing-apparel of all classes, in the decorations and processions of the religious feasts, and in the carnival, which lasts about ten days. Fond of Spectacular

As a people, they are pleasure-loving, light-hearted, without care, and without any adequate idea of responsibility. This perhaps is due in large measure to their training. During Spanish rule, government Pleasure Loving

positions and almost all the commerce of the Island were in the hands of the Spaniards. The Porto Rican had no need of developing either powers for governing or for looking after important interests. All that was expected of him was to be obedient and respectful. Thus by generations of training, they have become as light-hearted and irresponsible as a set of children.

Self Confident

Notwithstanding this simplicity of mind, the Porto Rican has a sublime confidence in himself. He thinks he can do things as well as any man living. Ask a carpenter if he can do a certain piece of work for you, and he is ready to begin without even waiting for your description; a young man or a young woman with scarcely an elementary education wants a certificate to teach. A native preacher can be called upon to preach a sermon without a moment's notification. The newly-fledged politicians want either independence or statehood at once—they know more about government than any of the United States officials. It makes no difference what class you approach, you find this same satisfaction and confidence in their own ability.

It need hardly be added that results do

not measure up to their high professions. Workmen as a rule perform their tasks in a most slipshod, careless manner. The carpenter mutilates the wood, the painter splashes paint over everything in the vicinity of his brush, the butcher tears and slashes the meat without regard to order, the coachman ties his harness up with ropes, the house-servant requires the constant presence of the mistress of the house to prevent covering up, instead of cleaning out the dust, the teacher and preacher are prone to draw upon their imaginations more than upon definite information, and the politician, if he cannot have his way, either resigns his position or sulks, refusing to take any part in the deliberations of the body of which he is a member.

The Porto Rican is by nature and training of an uncompromising temperament. This is especially manifest in his politics. There are numerous fights and riots during political campaigns and at election times. Although peaceable by nature, he cannot tolerate an opinion differing from his own, and blood flows freely in the pre-election contests. They have not yet learned to submit gracefully to majority rule.

Uncompro-
mising

Apt Scholars

Under proper instruction, it has been shown that the Porto Ricans are apt scholars. The carpenter soon learns to do his work with precision and skill. Order and neatness rapidly take the place of disorder and carelessness. If the people could only be brought to see their need of instruction instead of having such a high estimate of their own abilities, progress would be made much more rapidly.

**Musically
Inclined**

The people of the Island seem to be fond of music, but their ideas of it are most primitive. The common people have a gourdlike instrument with a number of horizontal indentures over which they draw a stick rapidly. This is called the "juiro" (pronounced "weero" or "witcherow"), and is used to accompany the guitar, tambourine or violin. The piano is used to a limited extent among the better classes, but their use is not such as to arouse the enthusiasm of a musician. The instruments are chiefly of inferior make, and owing to the climatic conditions, the wires become rusty, and the tones produced are decidedly "tin-panny." These are played with but little expression, the idea seemingly being to make as loud a sound as possible. Some of the brass bands that play

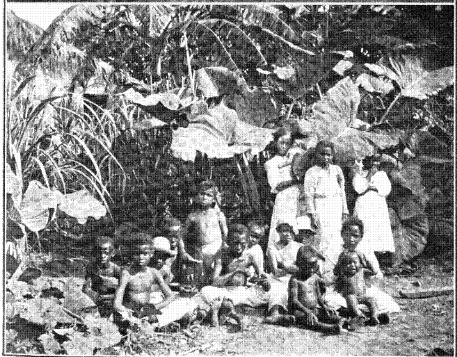
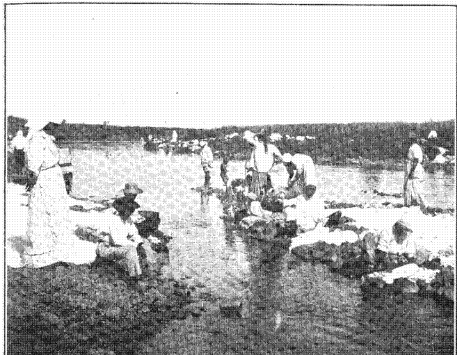
in the plazas of the larger towns produce fairly good music, but others of them are simply nerve-racking. Much that passes under the name of music could more properly be called noise, but where Porto Ricans have had opportunity for study and development, they have proved that musical ability is not wanting among them. In singing, they have commendable enthusiasm. Their voices are often shrill and harsh, lacking sweetness or soul power. This no doubt is due largely to their lack of training and practice. The church music in which they took part was limited to the chants of the Catholic Church. Secular songs were scarce and only the rudest kind were sung by any great number of the inhabitants. Since the introduction of gospel hymns by the Protestants, and the songs of the public schools, and greater facilities for the study of music, there has been a wonderful improvement in this respect, and all over the Island one can now hear the cheerful songs learned in school and church and from special instructors.

The Porto Ricans have not yet learned the dignity of labor. Their ideas, probably derived from the Spaniards, lead them to

Labor Not
Dignified

disdain the appearance of work. The gentleman and the lady do not work themselves—they merely direct their servants. To carry a package on the street is indicative of either poverty or lack of breeding. A family must be very poor if they cannot afford several servants. To do any kind of housework cannot be considered by the lady of the house. She sits in the parlor dressed in loose garments and spends much of the day in idly rocking to and fro in a rocking-chair. When she goes out shopping, she is either accompanied by a servant who carries her small purchases, or she hires a boy to carry them for her. If she is so poor that she must do some kind of work, this fact must be carefully concealed from her neighbors. A woman in good social standing is not expected to do any work that can be done by a servant.

Among the men there is the same contempt for manual labor. The merchants must of necessity be busy men, but they are very careful not to degrade themselves by doing any kind of common labor. They object to performing work that can be done by an employee. Business men do not carry bundles home at night. They seldom lend a



SOME NATIVE TYPES
 "Lavenderas" or Washerwomen
 Group of Colored Children



hand when some little mishap occurs, or when repairs are needed. They are gentlemen, and menial tasks are for common workmen. The same spirit is shown among the tradesmen. When a plumber is sent for, he usually comes accompanied by his man. His business is to tell the man what to do, while he himself stands by and watches him. The farmer does not go out to work upon his farm. He mounts a horse and rides around telling his laborers what work must be done. Ask a common laborer to carry your hand-baggage to the boat or to the station, and very likely he will come at the appointed hour with a colored boy whom he orders to take up the load and carry it while he himself receives the money and walks by the side of the boy. From the highest to the lowest classes this false notion concerning labor is found. It is a heritage of slavery and peonage and ought to have no place among a democratic people.

The Porto Rican is an inveterate gambler. The rich planter will play cards until he loses the profits of a whole year and then will sometimes mortgage his land. The leisure hours of the middle class are given up to the same practice. The poor will throw

**The Gamb-
ling Habit**

dice for their last penny and will then go hungry. The cockfights call forth the highest bets within reach of the spectators. When the Catholic Church has special need for money, it gets up some sort of a raffle. Boys apply the same principle in selling their wares. They go through the streets with sweetmeats for sale. You put a penny in the machine, turn a wheel and get as many pieces as are indicated by the finger at its stopping place. Everywhere the spirit of gambling seems to have taken hold of the people and become a part of their life.

III. CUSTOMS

THERE are many customs in Porto Rico that seem especially queer to an American because he finds nothing similar to them among his own people. To a person from another Latin country these differences are not so great.

Courtesies The forms of salutation are practically the same as those used in other Spanish countries, but it sounds strange to one unaccustomed to it to hear a person say "adios" or "goodbye" when he greets you on the street, or to see a man sign himself, "Your true servant who kisses your hand,"

or, if written to a lady, "Your faithful servant who kisses your feet." When a gentleman wishes to be remembered to the wife of his friend, he says to him, "Place me at the feet of your wife." When a gentleman is introduced to another, he repeats his own name and adds, "at your orders," and before parting he places his house at your disposal. These extravagant expressions have no significance other than that of formal courtesy.

The manner of disposing of the dead is shocking to an American. Bodies were allowed to rest in vaults or in graves only so long as the rent was paid. When this was neglected, the skeleton, or what remained of the body, was thrown into the bone vault, which is a cistern-like hole, open at the top and exposed to the weather. This practice was forbidden during the military government of the United States, and has not been permitted since. The burial of a poor person is a pitiful sight to witness. The body is laid in a rough, unplanned box, without a lid or any kind of a covering. A strip of wood is nailed on each side and allowed to project a couple of feet at each end for convenience in carrying it. Four

Burial of the
Dead

men raise the box to their shoulders, and, walking in the middle of the street, make their way to the cemetery. Women are not allowed by custom to accompany the body to the grave. Sometimes a few boys and men follow, at other times not a person is seen except those carrying the body. When the grave is reached the corpse is lifted out of the box, and with more or less consideration, lowered into a shallow grave and covered up by shovelling in the earth upon the unprotected body, or upon a few branches of trees that have been placed upon it.

An American lady told me of an occurrence witnessed by herself in a cemetery. She saw some men bring in the body of a child in one of these open boxes, and they did not even take the trouble to lift the little body out of the box, but dumped it into the grave as if it were nothing but a clod. A recent law forbids the use of these open boxes, but they are still used in many parts of the Island.

A Strange
Custom

They have a queer custom here in regard to a child that is still-born. Instead of mourning over it, they have a feast in honor of the occasion. They claim that as the little one never committed any sin, its com-

ing is in reality an angel's visit to the home. The festivities of the occasion resemble somewhat the accepted idea of an Irish "wake." Eating, drinking, music and dancing occupy the attention of the friends during the hours of the night.

One is amused in seeing persons carrying open umbrellas on bright moonlight nights. This has given rise to the report that the natives are afraid of the moonbeams and take this method of protecting themselves. The real object, however, seems to be protection from the falling dew. Not only is the Porto Rican afraid of the night dew, but he is superstitious about the night air. Upon retiring to his bedroom, he closes all openings and practically seals himself in until morning. This custom undoubtedly contributes to the diseases of the lungs which are quite prevalent.

Fear of
Night Air

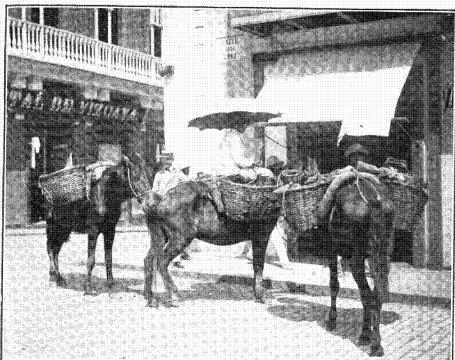
Wherever it is practicable, the washer-women carry their clothes to a stream instead of carrying water to their homes. They congregate at some point where they sit on the stones and pound the clothes upon them. The tropical sun beats down upon these women as bareheaded, barefooted, and barelegged they perform their tasks, but

The Washer-
woman

they seem not to be disturbed by it. At the close of the day, they balance their burdens upon their heads and return to their homes which may be a mile or two distant. Their manner of drying clothes brings dismay to the person who owns them. The clothes are hung up on barbed wires or on prickly bushes, so that when the wind blows it works disaster to the garments. At other times the clothing is laid upon the ground in filthy lots and in different kinds of objectionable places, so that they are not only soiled, but there is danger of carrying disease in them.

It was estimated by the shoe merchants in 1899 that 700,000 persons in Porto Rico wear no shoes, and if one is to judge by appearances, there are many of that number who rarely or never wash their feet. The skin becomes hardened and encrusted so that they are able to walk over sharp stones or rough roads without much inconvenience. In the large towns many compromise by wearing a sort of slipper or shoe with the heel tramped down. They hold this on by the toes while the heel part of it flaps and slides along the pavement. Men, women and children in large numbers use this sort of footwear in the towns, but in the country

▲ Barefooted
People



MARKET SCENES

Going to Market
Police Market Place



the custom of going barefooted is almost universal.

Except on dress occasions, the Porto Ricans are prone to be careless in their personal appearance. Men and women of the poorer classes wear soiled clothing most of the week, but on Sunday they come out arrayed in garments starched so stiff that they could stand alone.

Personal
Appearance

The women of the higher classes come to coffee in the morning with disheveled hair and garments loosely put on. They sit frequently around idly in deshabelle during the forenoon, but in the evening they dress well for dinner and for social events. Even when dressed for the street one cannot help noticing that in many cases there are evidences which betray the lack of neatness and care.

An abundant use of cheap perfumery and face powder is also noticeable among the Porto Rican women. Even the blacks lighten their color by a generous application of powder.

Among the poorer classes, there is a decided lack of taste displayed in the choice of colors. Yellow, green, pink and red in all sorts of combinations are the prevailing

colors. There has been quite a modification in these respects since the advent of the American women.

Market Day

Another custom that seems strange from the American point of view is the making of Sunday into the chief market day of the week. Each town has its market place which is used more or less through the week, but on Sunday, it is a perfect hive of business. People from the country crowd in with articles for sale, and those from the town go to market on that day even if they absent themselves the rest of the week. The chief use of Sunday seems to have been—market and mass in the morning, out-door pleasure in the afternoon, and a dance or concert or play of some kind for the evening.

A Natural Ambition

One of the pathetic features connected with the people of mixed blood is their desire to be considered white. As we have stated before, there is a comparatively small percentage of pure whites and a large percentage of persons of mixed blood. These latter want to be classed as whites. By a generous use of face-powder, by skillful dressing of the hair, by talking disparagingly of persons of negro blood, by explaining their own dark complexion as due either

to the sun or to Indian blood, or to a dark-skinned Spaniard, they try to avoid suspicion themselves, but they cannot eradicate the unmistakable signs of the negro race. With this kind of a feeling prevailing, one is surprised at the lack of sentiment against intermarriage. Especially among the poorer classes, blacks, whites, and persons of mixed blood live together indiscriminately. Among the higher classes, if a person has but a small amount of negro blood he can pass as white and marry into the best families.

IV. AMUSEMENTS

THE Porto Ricans are a pleasure-loving people, whose means for gratifying the desire for amusements are quite limited. Very few being able to read, books of all kinds are closed to them. The theatres are great attractions where they exist, but there are only a few of them on the Island, these being in the larger towns, and even here the people are too poor to patronize them in large numbers. Bad roads and expensive travel make it impossible to have any great assemblies at central points, so that "fairs" and "cir-

cuses" and "shows" are practically unknown.

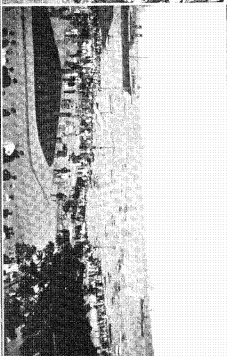
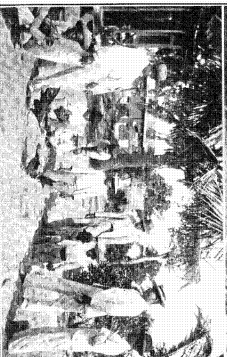
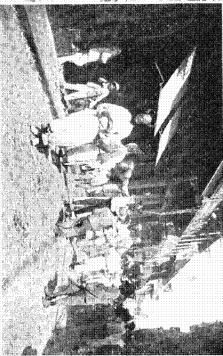
The annual attraction for the whole Island is the religious pilgrimage to the Church of our Lady of Monserrate. This brings devout Catholics and many others not so devout from almost every parish. It furnishes a substitute for "fairs" and other such functions in bringing together the people from all sections of the Island.

**Intellectual
Gatherings**

Neither do the people come together in intellectual gatherings. Courses of vocal and instrumental music and lectures could neither be appreciated nor sustained. The ignorance and the poverty of the great masses of the people have shut them off from many of the sources of pleasure enjoyed by other civilized nations. The isolated position of the Island has also had the effect of limiting their intellectual opportunities.

**Out Door
Sports**

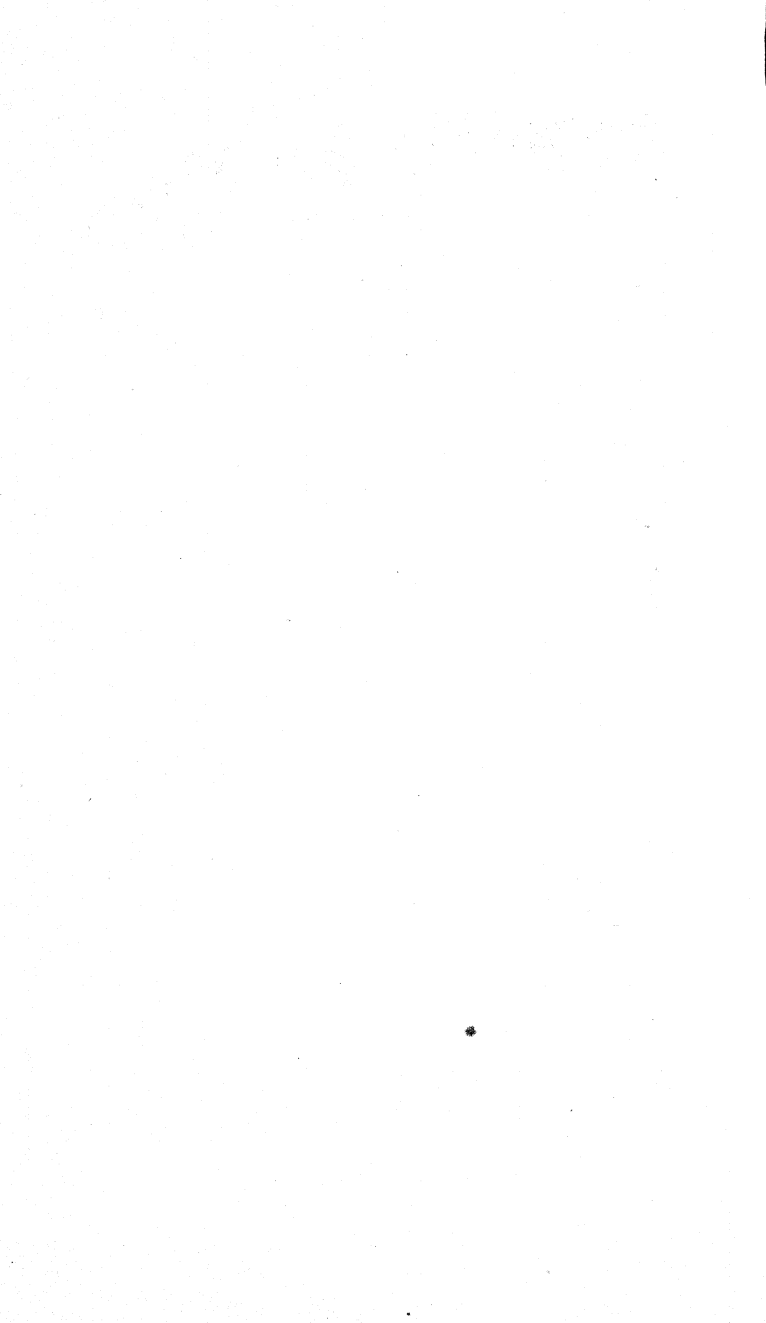
Until baseball was introduced by the American soldiers, there seems to have been little out-door sport. Few of the open air games have found a place in their amusements. Bathing, fishing and sailing are not favorite sports, the latter two are used to a limited extent, but almost wholly as a



VARIOUS AMUSEMENTS

A Beggar Band
A Cock Fight

Street Scene During Carnival
Annual Aquatic Sports



means of livelihood and not for pleasure. It will be seen from these limitations that their field of amusement is rather restricted. This, however, does not prevent them from enjoying such things as they have.

As stated before, the love of gambling is very general throughout the population. Anything that can be turned into a game of chance meets with favor. Throwing dice, playing with cards, dominoes or checkers, are only interesting as money is placed on the game.

Gambling

Betting on the cockfights is a most popular form of gambling. Before prohibited by law, many towns and villages had cockpits to which an entrance fee was charged. These exhibitions were usually given on Sunday afternoons and furnished the chief attraction of the day.

These fights were the best substitute they could provide for the bull fights of Spain and other Spanish countries. They were carried on in somewhat the following order: A number of cocks were tied to stakes placed within the enclosure, and when the spectators had arrived two were selected and the contest began. The fighting was done al-

Cock Fights.

most entirely by spurs which had been sharpened to a point almost as fine as a needle. As the heads of the birds became bloody, their owners sponged them off until they could see to renew the struggle. This continued until one of the contestants succeeded in driving the long, sharp spur through his rival's head. The dead bird was then thrown aside, the bets paid, and a couple of new cocks were put in the pit to continue the sport for the crowd that was still eager for the fray.

During Spanish rule cockpits were licensed by the municipalities and were patronized by all classes of society. Under American rule these fights have been prohibited by law, but there are still many of them carried on in sheds, and other outbuildings in the cities and suburbs, and especially throughout the rural districts where the police are not so vigilant.

Dancing

Perhaps the most popular form of amusement is dancing which is indulged in by all classes. Sunday night is the favorite time for the "bailes" or balls, with Saturday night as a close second. These balls last far into the night or rather into the morning. There are frequently more than forty

dances in the evening's program and the dancers move much more slowly than is the custom in the United States. The main feature seems to be a rhythmical movement of the body in time to music. They have also a dance which resembles slightly the waltz. The music played on guitars and a kind of mandolin is in very quick time, and the dancers fly around in a circle at a tremendous speed. This dance is more popular in the country, while the slow dances are used chiefly in the cities.

In the cities and towns one of the great attractions is the band concert in the principal plaza. In some places, there is a more or less ornamental band stand, but in others the band simply occupies a central position in the plaza. These concerts are given on Sunday evenings and on one or two evenings during the week. As the band begins to play, the crowd which has been gathering for some time commences to promenade up and down the plaza. This is kept up throughout the entire evening. There are a few benches around the side which are greatly in demand, and in San Juan rocking-chairs are placed in rows and rented for the even-

Band
Concerts

ing, chiefly to "los Americanos" as the Americans are called.

These concerts are really enjoyable affairs. The bright laughing faces of the young people promenading, the variety of colors that appear in the gowns of the young women and the neckties of the young men, the strains of the music that mingle with the laughter and conversation of the gay crowd, the balmy sea breeze fanning and soothing one's brow, the soft delicious air of this tropical Island bathing the body and filling the lungs—all these contribute to the fascination and charm of these gala evening hours.

The Carnival

The great annual festivity is the carnival which lasts ten days. This is the most disturbing of all the "fiestas." In San Juan, it is opened with a grand ball in the theatre. Two young women, chosen for their beauty, are crowned queens of the carnival. Immediately after the coronation, a great uproar takes place. Men and women begin throwing "papelitos" upon each other in great quantities. This consists of millions of small disks of different colored paper. It can be bought in little sacks containing about half a peck each, and many have taken

a supply with them. Before the evening is over, every one has been covered with these bits of paper, and the floor of the theatre is in some places several inches deep with them. Dancing is kept up until the morning, and the carnival with all its fantasies has been formally inaugurated.

In the afternoon and evening of each day the masqueraders appear on the streets. These are usually persons of the lower classes, although there are many others who join with them. Men dress up to represent various animals such as a bear, a donkey, a cow, an owl, etc. The favorite mask represents the devil with horns and a tail. Such a one usually is followed by a crowd of boys who obey his orders. He asks questions and they respond in chorus as they parade up and down the streets. He forms them into a circle on the plaza, takes the center, and after various maneuvers breaks through and is again followed by his crowd.

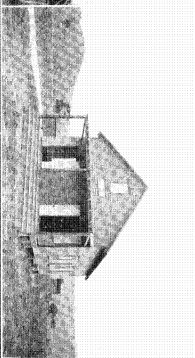
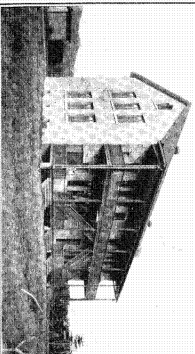
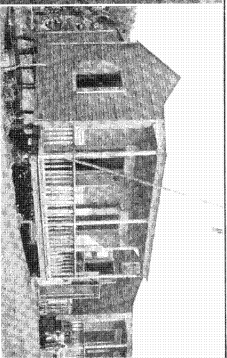
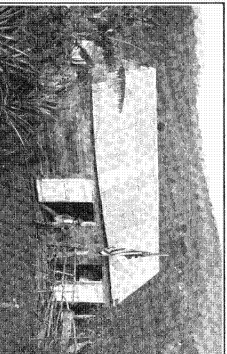
The women vie with each other in making striking costumes out of bright colored cotton materials. Many of these only come to the knees, and the lurid colors of hosiery are everywhere prominent. These women run around in the most aimless manner, trying

to attract attention by their masks and by voices disguised as high squeaky falsettos such as are used in a Punch and Judy show. In the meantime the boys are not idle. They have sacks filled with flour, bottles of perfumery, etc., which they use freely upon the passer-by.

The evenings are given up to "bailes." One night there will be a "first-class" baile for whites, then a "second-class" for blacks, then a "black and white" baile for both colors, masks, of course, being used.

The closing feature of the carnival is a grand parade on Sunday afternoon. Carriages are gaily decorated with bright colored papers, and at the head of the procession ride the two queens. As they pass through the streets persons on the balconies throw balls of serpentine paper at the queens and at their friends in the carriages. They also hurl this paper from balcony to balcony, until the streets are a net work, which presents a "fiesta" day appearance as it sways in the breeze.

Much of this sport is innocent fun, but immoral men and women find in the disguises and masks of carnival week a suit-



A Rented Rural School Building
Graded Schoolhouse Built by Government

TYPES OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

A Rented Village School Building
Rural Schoolhouse Built by Government

able covering for taking liberties they otherwise would not dare to take, and in many ways they use their concealed identity for promoting their nefarious trade.

Perhaps the greatest part of the amusement of the Porto Ricans has been furnished by the Catholic Church. There were about forty "holy days," or "fiesta" days, as they were generally called, in each year. These were legal holidays, and work was quite generally suspended. The Church provided parades, semi-religious services, spectacular exhibitions, and, in many ways, it sought to gratify the taste of the people for amusement.

Religious
Festival

In our judgment, this custom was disastrous in several respects. It caused the people to regard the Church as an amusement bureau instead of an institution to direct their thoughts toward spiritual and ethical ideas. It brought into vulgar use many of the emblems and words that should have been used only in the Church or in connection with religious themes. It encouraged idleness by giving the working people more than forty holidays in addition to the

fifty-two Sundays of the year, thus putting a premium on idleness in a climate where every incentive to labor is needed to help overcome the enervating influence of the atmosphere.

CHAPTER IV.

EDUCATION

I. SPANISH PROVISIONS

THE people of Porto Rico have had few educational privileges from the very beginning of their history. ¹As late as 1765 there were only two schools for children on the Island, which then had a population of 44,913 inhabitants.

² In 1799 the municipal council of San Juan employed four teachers to take charge of as many schools for girls, and it is supposed that there already existed like schools for boys. In 1815 the Governor-General was ordered to visit the schools of the Island and suggest reforms. He visited only those of San German and San Juan: if there were others they must have been private schools or so unimportant as not to demand official notice.

Spanish
Provisions

In 1838 the first steps were taken toward establishing a uniform school system. In 1846 the municipalities were instructed to buy supplies for poor children. In 1865 a

¹O'Reilly Report to the King of Spain in 1765.

²See Report Military Governor of Porto Rico. Page 117.

royal decree provided for the reorganization of the system of public instruction, and in 1880, a new educational law was enacted which remained in force until 1898, when the autonomous constitution gave Porto Rico authority to organize her own educational system.

Little further comment is needed upon the failure of these various laws than a glance at their results as shown in the conditions that obtained when the Americans assumed control. According to the census of 1899, out of a total population of 953,243, but 143,472 or 15 per cent. were able to read and write, while only 5,045, or one half per cent., had more than elementary education. The attendance in public and private schools was 19,223, or a little over 6 per cent. of the children of the school age.

**A Lone
School
Building**

When the American Government took charge of the schools of Porto Rico, there was only one school building received from Spain. This was a residence that had been given by a benevolent lady of San German to the municipality to be used for school purposes. Most of the schools were conducted in the homes of the teachers who received an allowance for rent.

Soon after the establishment of the military government, the acting director of public instruction reported as follows: "We visited schools during school hours and found the teacher in bed taking a siesta; other teachers were away attending store. In another case, we found a teacher who was running a rum shop. Teachers went around the schoolroom in untidy and insufficient attire, and the demands of the neighborhood callers upon the time of the teacher left him less than the required time for instructing the public."

¹According to the report of the Military Governor, the teachers were largely politicians and office-holders who felt they had a life tenure on their positions, and as they had nothing to gain by increasing their efficiency and nothing to lose because of neglect, there was little interest in the scholars or the school. Some teachers lived in Europe and had substitutes doing their work for half their salary. The qualifications of teachers were far from the ordinary standards. Some who held superior certificates took the teachers' examination in 1899 and received less than 25 per cent. in the

¹See Report of Military Governor of Porto Rico. Page 122.

elementary branches. This was due in part to the same worthlessness of the secondary schools that characterized those of the primary grades. In these secondary institutions of learning, there was lack of preparation among the teachers, and on the part of the pupils a lack of preparation also, due largely to the fact that they had few, if any, textbooks to study from,—the lecture system being used.

The Institute

The Institute which was located in San Juan, and was supposed to furnish a college education, had no building of its own. Again quoting the report of the Military Governor.¹ "The classes were held at various places in the city of San Juan—some in private residences. Students were permitted to study elsewhere, passing examinations at stated times. Private schools could also enter into fixed relations with the Institute." The attendance in February 1899 was about 60, but the registration was much larger, including those studying at home and in the private schools referred to above. It was the opinion of the Commission that the Institute as conducted was "as nearly worthless as possible."

¹Report. Page 123.

A similar state of affairs existed in the Normal School. In the words of the Commissioner's report—"Students attend very irregularly, and, indeed, it would seem it is not a matter of much importance whether they attend or not, as all in time are graduated. There are some lectures given on pedagogy, but nothing was seen to convince the commission that this school can prepare any one to teach, even in the most elementary branches."

**The Normal
School**

According to these reports, the educational system of Porto Rico under Spanish rule was wholly inadequate for the large population of the Island, and the schools in actual operation were utterly incompetent to give a child an elementary school education or to train persons for teachers, or to supply students with an accredited college course.

That these reports are true is amply verified by evidence received from teachers and prominent citizens of Porto Rico in the inquiries made by special United States Commissioner, Dr. H. K. Carroll, in 1899, concerning the public school system. ¹ In summing up the information received from

**Some
Evidence**

¹Report on the Island of Porto Rico. Page 32.

many representative Porto Ricans, the Commissioner says: "The system of public schools was antiquated, and few improvements seem to have been made. In practice it was decidedly inferior and insufficient. Most attention was given, naturally, to urban schools, and these were inadequate in almost every respect. Less attention was given to schools in the rural districts, where the difficulties were greatest. Something was done for the boys, but little for the girls. . . . The scholars were generally clothed, but there were some exceptions among the smaller ones. . . . The system of instruction was generally superficial and not solid, and theoretical rather than practical." These statements are further strengthened by the written testimony of persons who taught for years under the Spanish regime. Some extracts are here given from a letter of Mr. Enrique Landron, found in the Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1902. Mr. Landron was a teacher under the old system and is now a school supervisor under the American rule. He says, ¹"There was no grading of the schools. Every teacher classified his pupils

¹Report of 1902. Page 9.

according to his own ideas. . . . As to method of teaching, the pupil had to learn by heart the lessons in the text-books. These text-books were written in the old way of questions and answers. The pupil had to learn daily a certain number of questions. At the time of the recitation, the teacher would read out the questions to the pupil, who in turn would answer the same *ad pedem litterae*. The pupils had to learn their lessons at home. A few minutes were granted to them before the recitation to read over the answers they had to recite that day. The highest mark was to the pupil who recited the lesson without omitting any of the words. Besides these recitations, the teachers were supposed to give some oral explanations in grammar, arithmetic and catechism. Object lessons were entirely unknown.

“As to discipline, if there was any, it was very bad. An unbearable noise was heard continuously in the school. Corporal punishment, abnormal positions, and retention after school were the most common punishments used. . . . The teacher and his family generally lived in the schoolhouse. . . . The school was free only for poor children.

Other pupils had to pay a monthly fee to the teacher. . . . The teachers obtained their schools through a competitive examination before an examining board appointed by the Governor. In this way the teacher obtained his school for life. He was the proprietor of his school, and it could not be taken away from him only through special legal proceedings. Teachers were promoted according to the length of public service. . . . In fact, it can be said that there was no real organization in the public schools of Porto Rico, every teacher being the ruler of his own school."

II. UNDER THE UNITED STATES MILITARY GOVERNMENT

Work of the
Military Gov-
ernment

Such in brief were the educational conditions that confronted the new military government. In January, 1899, General Eaton was placed in charge of educational affairs. After a tour of inspection, he recommended the appointment of sixteen English supervisors, who, in addition to their work as inspectors, should be teachers of English. The recommendations were approved, and this number was appointed and entered upon their duties at once. Then

came in rapid succession the organization of school districts, provision for school trustees, for school taxes, for admitting both sexes to rural schools, for the separation of school buildings from residences, making the schools absolutely free, establishing a nine months' school year, inaugurating a graded system, limiting the number of scholars to 50 for one teacher, providing a principal where there are more than four schools, eliminating Church doctrine and religion, loaning text-books free of charge. In July, 1899, a Board of Education was constituted which was to "act in a general advisory and superintending capacity over the educational interests of Porto Rico." In September a model and training school was opened in San Juan. Provision was also made by the military government for the establishment of a normal and industrial school, and for the introduction of high schools.

III. UNDER CIVIL GOVERNMENT

¹ "When the government was turned over to the civil authorities, it was found that 612 schools had been put in operation. During

**Steps Taken
by the Civil
Government**

¹See Report of Commissioner of Education, 1901. Page 7.

the first year of civil government, this number had been increased to 792, of which 733 were open at the close of the school year." Commissioner Brumbaugh thus summarizes the work accomplished during the school year." ¹ "With the public elementary schools thoroughly organized; with the new school law prepared by this department, and enacted by the last legislature in full force and successful operation; with efficient supervision provided; with thirty-nine new public school buildings completed and in daily use; with a reorganized corps of teachers; with a system of agricultural schools giving practical education to 1,000 chosen youths; with the normal school fully organized and ready to begin its work; with the summer Normal happily concluded; with a high school in successful operation in San Juan; with the annual budget for education increased from \$400,000 to \$500,000; with every school amply equipped with all necessary books and supplies; with a school year of nine months throughout the Island, and with a rapidly growing sentiment in favor of free public schools, it is eminently reasonable to claim that the cause of education has made gratifying progress in Porto Rico during the past year."

¹Report of Commissioner of Education, Page 8.

Commissioner Lindsay's report for 1901-1902 shows that the number of schools in operation at the close of that year was 874. For 1902-03, he reports 1097 open in June. For 1903-04, 1113 were open at the close of the year.

By way of comparison and report of progress, he says: ¹ "The total number of scholars enrolled in the Spanish schools Dec. 31, 1897 is reported at 22,265 as compared with 42,070 in the American schools on June 20, 1902. . . . We now have a graded course of study, which is followed so far as possible by all teachers, even by those teaching in the ungraded rural schools. The best books and supplies the Government can get are furnished free, and there are sixteen school supervisors who are required to visit each school in their respective districts at least once a month."

During the school year of 1902-03, 70,216 different pupils were enrolled in the schools. This, while showing a gratifying increase in the number being taught by the Government, is still a small percentage of those of school age. The census of 1899 gives the number of children between the ages of 5

¹Report School Commissioner, 1902. Page 8.

and 18 as 322,393. The estimated number for 1893, based upon the rate of increase for the sixteen years previous to the census of 1899, is 377,200. The number enrolled for 1902-03 is, therefore, 21.7 per cent of the school population given by the last official census, or 19 per cent of the estimated school population for the year 1902-03. This enrollment includes 6,177 pupils of special schools which are reported as follows: Kindergarten schools, 10; night school classes, 44; industrial school classes, 6; high school classes, 23; practice school classes, 2; normal school classes, 4.

In commenting upon the number enrolled in the schools during the school year of 1902-03, the Commissioner remarks,¹ "One-fifth of the total population of school age in school is but a poor showing compared with the United States, where one fifth of the total population attend school. With us only about one fifteenth of the total population enjoy that privilege. Where there are four boys and girls of school age who have no school to which they can go to every boy or girl who can go to school,

¹Report, 1903. Page 17.

the bane of illiteracy cannot be entirely removed.

¹ The figures for 1903-04 do not present even as favorable a report. The total enrollment for the year was 61,168, or nearly 10,000 less than the year before. The Commissioner accounts for this in the different methods employed in making the enumeration. In 1902-03 every separate name enrolled throughout the year was counted, while in 1903-04 duplicates and re-enrollments were excluded. He also points out that while the average daily attendance for the former year was only 36,308, the attendance for the latter year was 41,798. This brings the percentage of the children enrolled in all schools as compared with the total population of school age down to 19.7 per cent as based upon the census of 1899, or only 16.1 per cent when based upon the estimated school population of 1904.

One of the great difficulties that has stood in the way of the educational department is the lack of proper school buildings. Spain turned over one schoolhouse to the American Government. The Department had to rent buildings, equip them with

Lack of
School Build-
ings

¹See Report for 1904. Page 15.

school furniture, and furnish all books and other necessary supplies. Under Commissioner Brumbaugh, \$200,000 was secured from the United States Government for school extension. This has been increased by a share of the trust funds refunded to Porto Rico by the United States. This money has been wisely and economically administered in securing schoolhouses for the Island. Where communities were able to raise part of the sum required for a building, they were expected to do so. In many places where they were too poor to contribute, especially in rural districts, no help was demanded.

In this way the Insular Government has constructed over seventy school buildings. The graded schools are plain two-story structures built of brick or stone. The rural schoolhouses are one-story frame buildings. The Department is still under the necessity of renting over six hundred buildings for school purposes. Many of these are wholly unfit for school work, and the teachers labor under great disadvantages. The rents are in numerous cases exorbitant, and the money that is sadly needed for the extension of school privi-

leges has to be paid for the use of these houses. The Insular Government seems to be doing its best in this matter, but it is felt that the United States Government ought to assist still further in securing buildings in which to house the schools of the Island. This feeling is expressed by Commissioner Lindsay in the following language:

¹ "Appeals have been made from time to time to the people of the United States, and some way must be devised by which the people of the United States can do more than merely take an interest in the public school system of Porto Rico. They must show their sympathy in a more practical way, in the ambition of the people to develop a system of public schools equal to any to be found in the United States. Thus far the United States has given no financial aid except that which has come from the trust funds refunded by the President of the United States, and a part of which has been used in the construction of school buildings. It is true that Congress has been more than just in legislating for Porto Rico and that the Island enjoys a singular token

of this generosity in the use of its customs receipts and its internal revenue as a part of its insular revenue, but some further substantial aid should be extended."

Some Results To any supporter of the American Public School system, the results that are being obtained in Porto Rico are exceedingly encouraging. The percentage of illiteracy is rapidly decreasing; the discipline of the school is teaching the pupils obedience and self-control; children are better clothed and lessons of cleanliness are being learned; there is a growing demand for higher education; standards of life are being raised; patriotism is being instilled in all classes—in fact, the public schools of Porto Rico are a mighty force in transforming the life of this people.

**The Language
Question**

In one important particular we differ in opinion from that held by the school authorities. Commissioner Brumbaugh, in speaking of the language used in the schools, remarks, ¹ "We want the children to have and to use both languages." Commissioner Lindsay is of the same opinion, for he states: ² "There is no intention to rob them

¹Report, 1901. Page 13.

²Report, 1902. Page 23.

of the use of the Spanish language." We do not agree with these sentiments. The United States is not interested in preserving either the Spanish or any other foreign language. One of the great arguments in favor of the public school system is the fact that it teaches the use of one tongue and thus aids in making a homogeneous people. In some of the States of the United States petitions have been sent to the legislatures requesting a teacher for a neighborhood who would use a specified foreign language in the schoolroom because all the children used that language and none of them understood English. These requests have been denied and the principle has been observed that the public school system must be conducted in English.

In the judgment of the writer, there is as much, perhaps more, need of the application of this principle in Porto Rico than in the foreign colonies of some of our States. It is the desire of the Americans, and of many of the Porto Ricans, that this people be "Americanized" as soon as possible. How is this to be done? Not by reading Spanish literature, for there is not much of a complimentary nature to be found there,

A Personal
Opinion

while there is much hostility toward Americans and American ideals. Not by talking in Spanish to Americans who live on the Island, for very few of them can express themselves well in that language. The most prolific source of the misunderstandings that really exist between Porto Ricans and Americans is the inability to converse freely in a common language. That common language will not be Spanish. Of necessity it must be English. If the people learn to read American literature and come to know our ideals of national life, if they are able to converse in an intelligent manner with the American officials and citizens who reside in Porto Rico, it will not be long until this people shall be thoroughly American. The only organization that can bring about this transformation is the public school system. We believe that, if the schools were conducted exclusively in English, in a few years all the school children would be able to converse and to read in that language. As the schools are now conducted, with a few exceptions, Spanish is the language of the schoolroom. A teacher of English comes in and gives a lesson a day in most of the graded schools. Several lessons a

week or less is the maximum which the rural schools receive where English is taught. The children speak Spanish both at home and in school, and it is not to be expected that without practice they will become familiar with a foreign language. Even college students who study German or French for several years in the States are unable to converse in those languages. Can we expect more from children who study English one hour a day and use Spanish the rest of the time?

Let us examine some of the objections that are made to the immediate conduct of the schools in English.

**Objections
and Answers**

1. It is too expensive. American teachers cost more than Porto Rican teachers.

In answer to this objection, it may be stated that the salaries of ninety-nine special teachers of English would be saved and could be applied toward making up the difference between the salaries now paid Porto Rican teachers and what American teachers would cost. Moreover, it is better to have the schools placed on the right basis even if it somewhat reduced the number for a short time.

2. It would work hardship to the Porto Rican teachers who do not know English.

The schools are not run in the interests of the teachers but for the good of the scholars. If aspirants for teachers' positions knew that the work had to be conducted in English, they would soon acquire the language. If the Government in 1898 had stated that after five years all public school work should be conducted in English, those preparing themselves for teaching positions would have governed themselves accordingly, and would have been prepared to do the work in the manner required.

3. The progress of the scholars would be slow where the teacher does not understand Spanish and the pupils do not understand English.

Experience has shown that children readily learn a language that is constantly used in the school room. In New York city many children who do not understand English enter the public schools, and in a remarkably short time they are keeping up in their work with native born American children. The Porto Rican boys and girls being especially quick in picking up new

ideas and new words would experience little difficulty in adopting the English speech.

4. Children ought to have an education in their native tongue.

We do not accept this theory. Children ought to receive their education in the language of the country of which they form a part. If more is desired, it should be paid for privately. The Porto Ricans do not understand American ideals and American ways because they have had almost all of their associations with Spaniards. Many of the Americans who went to Porto Rico were not representative citizens and they soon left a wrong impression of American manhood and womanhood. As before stated, misunderstandings are constantly arising between Americans and Porto Ricans, caused chiefly by the failure to comprehend each other's speech. It is imperative that the new generation shall absorb the real spirit of American life as set forth in her best periodicals and books, and at the same time be able to converse with the Government officials, the merchants and other Americans who visit the Island, to the mutual advantage of both parties. To accomplish these results, we believe that English

alone should be the language of the schools.

5. It would cause a revulsion of public feeling against the schools.

On the contrary, we believe it would make the schools more popular. When the people of the Island learn that to secure any government position a man or woman must speak the English language, parents will be glad to have their children avail themselves of the advantages of the English-speaking public schools.

6. The same results can be better obtained by gradually introducing the English text-books and instruction.

This means the depriving of many of the children who have attended the public schools the last few years and those who are now in attendance of a practical knowledge of the English language, and retarding the growth of American ideas in these formative days of national life and spirit. The experiment tried in the common schools of the Philippine Islands in having English as the sole language of the school room has been a great success, and is giving further evidence of the wisdom of having but one language for all the school children of our Republic.

We believe that there should be no exceptions made in the principle governing our public school system, that is, wherever the American public school is found, the official language of the school room should be English.

Perhaps the most far-reaching official act of Commissioner Lindsay was the bringing of five hundred Porto Rican school teachers to the United States for a brief summer season of study and travel. Most of these teachers had never been beyond the shores of their native Island. A new world was revealed to them and a truer conception of American life was formed in their minds. One section of the company attended the summer session at Harvard, and the other section attended at Cornell. In addition to the instruction of these schools, a number of excursions were arranged for them to places in the immediate vicinity of the colleges, and before departing for Porto Rico, they visited New York, Philadelphia and Washington. This enterprise meant much more than the pleasure and profit received by these five hundred young men and young women. While it was of inestimable value to them in enlarging their vision and giving

A Profitable
Enterprise

them a glimpse of the life in the great eastern cities of the United States, with few exceptions, it made them advocates of Americanism among the many thousands of school children who come under their instruction. It is our opinion that a few more excursions of this kind would do more to break down the prejudice that exists to some extent against the American Government than any other propaganda that could be devised. Commissioner Lindsay and those associated with him deserve great credit for this stroke of statesmanship, and for the admirable manner in which it was carried through to success.

CHAPTER V

MORALS AND RELIGION

I. MORAL CONDITIONS

THE people of the United States point with great pride to the sturdy, religious character of the founders of their nation. **Our Fore-fathers** The Puritans of New England, the Dutch of New York, and the Quakers of Pennsylvania, are types of the men who gave direction and strength in the formative period of our national life. These men came to the new world to found permanent homes where they might enjoy religious liberty.

Porto Rico has no such noble ancestry. **Poto Rican Ancestry** The Spaniards who came to this Island were soldiers, adventurers, politicians, merchants, priests and convicts. All of these, with perhaps the exception of the last, expected, after a temporary residence, to return to Spain and enjoy the wealth that had been accumulated in Porto Rico. Their object was to secure money, no matter what means were employed. It is not surprising that, with such men as their rulers, the an-

nals of this people is a repetition of tyranny, cruelty and immorality.

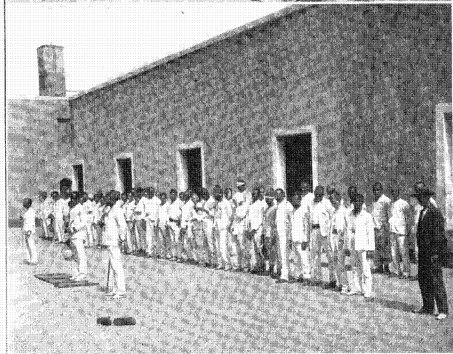
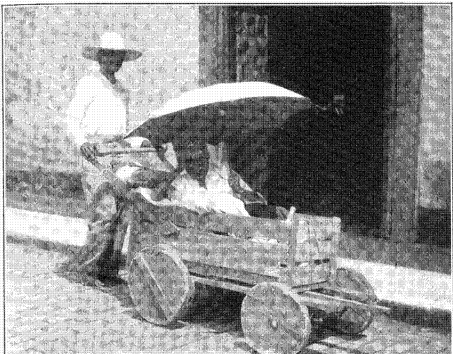
Floating
Spanish
Population

Few of the men of the classes mentioned brought wives with them. During their residence here, they lived promiscuously with Indian and colored women and usually left numerous descendants when they returned to Spain. The influence of this large floating Spanish population was especially disastrous to morality because they were men of the official and commercial classes who were supposed to represent a better civilization than that found on the Island—the civilization of proud old Spain.

Permanent
Spanish
Population

Friar Abbad, who wrote in 1782, gives us some information of the kind of Spaniards who formed a part of the permanent population. After referring to the allotment of land to the peasant class and other colonists, he says:¹ "The same inducements could be extended to male convicts in the prisons who have finished their term of banishment and do not desire to return to Spain, as has frequently been the case, some remaining because they find the country to their liking, others by reason of lack of sufficient means to pay for their passage, and these

¹Fray Inigo Abbad, *Historia de la Isla San Juan Batista*, Madrid, 1788.



THE LOWEST CLASSES

A Beggar
Prisoners in the Jail Yard



having no lands or homes of any kind, resort to labor on estates, or become smugglers, or commit other excesses, which necessitates their flight to other colonies. * * * Thus all classes—landless squatters, free slaves, liberated convicts, discharged soldiers, vagrants and adventurers—could find themselves sufficiently provided for after the fashion of the country.”

In 1815 the social conditions were much improved by the influx of colonists and their families from South America and from some of the other islands of the West Indies, due to the “Act of Grace.” Colonel Flinter, however, in 1834, found society still in a deplorable state. After speaking of the officers, merchants and tradesmen, he says:¹ “Another class, forming the floating mass on the surface of society, is composed of adventurers from all countries, gamblers, etc. * * * Still another class, which forms no inconsiderable part of the colonists, consists of those men who, for political or civil crimes, have been sent to the galleys of this fortress. At the expiration of their imprisonment they are set at liberty, and few

Criminal
Classes

¹Colonel Flinter, *An Account of the Present State of the Island of Puerto Rico*, London, 1834.

have any inducement to return to their native country. * * * The heterogeneous mixture of all classes and colors forms a striking feature in the population, and has a corresponding effect on society and manners, and distinguishes the inhabitants in the relations of social life from other nations."

**The Rural
Population**

Count de Caspe, in his report to the King, says of the rural population:¹ "Destitute as they are of religious instruction and moral restraint, their unions are without the sanction of religious or civil law, and last just as long as their sensual appetites last; it may, therefore, be truly said, that in the rural districts of Porto Rico, the family morally constituted does not exist."

In view of the ancestry of this people, and the laxity of morals that is induced by a tropical climate, and the corruption of the spiritual leaders which we shall discuss later, it ought not to be surprising if we find here, as we study the people, conditions which in our country would be considered shockingly immoral, but which in Porto Rico can scarcely be considered as anything

¹Count de Caspe, The Governor's Report to the King.

more than non-moral among the great masses of the people.

The census of 1899 shows that 158,570 persons claimed to be legally married, while 84,242 acknowledged that they were living in concubinage. There were also reported 148,605 illegitimate children. This alarming and deplorable condition calls for some explanation. We have already shown that the official and commercial classes of Spaniards expected to remain in Porto Rico only long enough to make a fortune or at least a competence and then return to Spain. While living on the Island, removed from restraining home influence, many of them fell into self-indulgence and license. Thus a system of concubinage grew up even among the better class of people.

Some Census
Figures

Among this class, however, the women as a rule are virtuous, but the men are corrupt. The fathers and husbands are very particular that their daughters shall not go out unaccompanied and that their wives shall be protected, but they give themselves unrestrained license. A man may or may not have a legitimate wife and family, but he is almost sure to have as many concu-

Among the
Better Class

bines as he is able to support and by whom he raises up families of children.

There seems to be little sentiment against this custom on the part of the wives. In some cases the illegitimate children are brought into the home of the legitimate family and all grow up together. Usually, however, they live in separate homes. On the plantations, the owner frequently acts as if he had absolute possession of all who live on the estate, and many of the women bear children who point him out as their father.

**Influence of
Criminals**

The large criminal class that remained in the Island after having served their terms in the fortresses had no respect for law and they contributed much to the lowering of the moral tone of the inhabitants.

**Failure of the
Church**

With such strong forces arrayed against the custom of marriage, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the church authorities would have made a strong fight for the sanctity of the home. The priests, on the contrary, lent their influence to the foes of the home, first, by living immoral lives themselves, and, second, by placing almost insurmountable barriers in the way of the poor people who wanted to marry. It

is not putting the case too strongly to assert that a majority of the Spanish priests on the Island have unsavory reputations.

Among these priests drunkenness is not a serious offense, gambling and profane language is so general as to be scarcely commented upon, and people only smile when the relations of the "padre" to the women of the parish are mentioned. Many of the priests are fathers of children, whom they partially or wholly support, and some of them live openly with women who rear their families. A short time ago one of the richest priests appeared before a court in the western part of the Island, and, in order that his children might inherit his property, he swore to being their father—yet the occurrence scarcely caused any comment, so accustomed are the people to the immorality of the priests.

Although the manner of the priests' lives is well known to the ecclesiastical authorities, there have seldom been severe measures taken to change the conditions. If a priest makes himself obnoxious in a neighborhood, he may be changed to another parish, but to dismiss him from the priesthood is a very rare procedure.

Disreputable
Priests

**Church
Barriers**

In addition to the bad example of those who should have been their spiritual leaders, the ecclesiastical authorities made it difficult for the poor to get married because of the following practices:

First, an exorbitant wedding fee was charged by the priest. Although the law of 1858 forbade the clergy from taking fees for the celebration of the sacraments, the priests quite generally disregarded it. ¹ In Dr. Carroll's report, we find that the average fees were as follows: Matrimony, simple service, \$10.00; more elaborate service, \$16.00, the rates being increased as the persons were able to pay. ² A lawyer from Aguadilla stated that there the wedding fee was as high as \$16.00. ³ The Secretary of the Board of Health at San Juan stated that he paid \$16.00 for the wedding service. ⁴ Another gentleman from San German said that the wedding service cost from \$12.00 to \$16.00. Much other testimony brought out the same facts. In talking with people in all sections of the Island, the writer was repeatedly given the same figures, so that it would seem that these statements can be proved by many witnesses. When it is kept

¹See Report, page 658. ²Page 663. ³Page 659. ⁴Page 690.

in mind that the ordinary laborer received about thirty cents per day as his wage, it will be seen that, from a financial standpoint, marriage was practically impossible. It is true that in some parishes no fee or a small one was charged to persons who were willing to get married at seven o'clock in the morning. But as the evening is the regular time for weddings, and a morning wedding is an advertisement of poverty, few seem to have been willing to avail themselves of this privilege.

Second, the law of consanguinity debarred many. Persons were not allowed to marry if they were related to within four degrees, unless they obtained a special dispensation from the Church. This would cost from \$30.00 to \$50.00.

**Consan-
guinity**

Third, other Church requirements. These, perhaps, can best be stated in the language of Father Montanes to Dr. Carroll:

**Other Church
Require-
ments**

¹ "They have to present their baptismal certificates so as to show their age, if they have been born in a different district; then they have to produce the consent of their parents, according to their age; then they have to satisfy the priest as to their knowl-

**List of
Obstacles**

¹Commissioners' Report. Page 693.

edge of Catholic doctrine, so as to enable him to know whether they are in a fit state to enter Catholic marriage; then the bans have to be proclaimed three successive Sundays; then they exact the confession, as the Catholic religion considers marriage a sacrament. * * * If the parties seeking marriage are related, they have to get a dispensation from the Bishop."

It will thus be seen from the priest's own statement that the Church makes it quite difficult for persons to get married, even when they are favorably disposed to matrimony.

**Obstacles to
Civil
Marriage**

Among the men of Porto Rico, there were many who were unwilling to meet the demands of the Church and preferred a civil marriage. Such persons were denounced from the pulpit as living in concubinage, and were excommunicated from the Church. Moreover, many obstacles were put in the way of securing a civil marriage. Here is the process as described by the municipal judge of Arroyo in Dr. Carroll's report:
¹ "The *expediente* necessary for civil marriages consists of, first, a birth certificate; second, the document asking permission to

¹Report. Page 697.

be married; third, the parents' permission to allow their children to be married; fourth, a document from the judge in which he says he knows of no former marriage of the interested party; fifth, a re-statement of intention to marry; sixth, the bans which have been published; seventh, a document stating that the former document has been published; eighth, the document in which the celebration is set forth; ninth, the bans which were posted on the wall."

This was quite a formidable undertaking for the man who wanted civil marriage. The priest charged from \$1.00 to \$1.50 for each birth certificate, the municipal judge charged for drawing up the *expediente*, and if the birth is registered there was another fee for the clerk.

Because of these obstacles, it is easily seen that many who desired a legal conjugal state were deprived of it by the exorbitant fees, and by the time and trouble demanded to secure the necessary documents.

As concubinage became more common and public disapproval of it correspondingly weakened, there grew up a more or less pronounced opposition to marriage vows. It was much more convenient to be

Influence of
Custom

free to leave one partner and select another without any legal complications. The children did not constitute much of an obstacle to this custom, for up to the age of five or six they needed no clothing and they had little difficulty in finding something to eat. The mothers in many cases known to me personally did not hesitate to tell the names of the fathers of her different children, and seemed not to feel that there was any disgrace attached to such conduct. Of course, there are many couples who are as faithful to each other as though the marriage service had pronounced them man and wife, but this does not prove that it is the rule, as some writers have been led to assert.

Change for
the Better

Since the American occupation these non-moral and immoral conditions have been rapidly changing for the better. This has been brought about by the strong opposing sentiment of the best Americans who live on the Island, by the moral teachings of the public schools, by the influence of the young men and the young women of Porto Rico who finish their education in the United States and return to the Island to live, and last, and perhaps greatest of all, by the examples and teachings of the many

missionaries, both ministers and religious lay-workers, who have been sent to Porto Rico for the sole purpose of raising the standards of manhood and womanhood.

These men and women have denounced immoral practices not only among Porto Ricans, but also among Americans living on the island, and have wielded a great influence in bringing about a healthier moral atmosphere among all classes.

II. CATHOLICISM

IN her discoveries and conquests, when Spain set up her banner, she also took possession in the name of the Catholic church. Priests or friars usually attended every expedition, and the church was established in the first settlement. In Porto Rico, Columbus raised the banner of Spain and the emblem of the Catholic church in 1493, and the two institutions thus represented continued their close relationship until the American occupation in 1898. In order to understand just what power and influence the Church has exerted in Porto Rico, we shall consider her relations, first, to the Colonial Government; second, to the public funds; third, to public instruction; and fourth, to public morality.

Relation to
the Colonial
Government

When Bishop Manso arrived in Porto Rico in 1513 as the first incumbent of that office, he was unable by moral suasion to control the people and set up the authority of the church. In 1519, he returned to Spain and secured for himself the power of Provincial Inquisitor. This clothed him with greater authority than that possessed by the Colonial Government. He at once instituted a vigorous campaign against those who did not submit to him. Diego Torres Vargas, Canon of San Juan Cathedral, says in his Memoirs: "The delinquents were brought from all parts to be burned and punished here." According to Neumann,² they were not tied to a stake, but were enclosed in a hollow plaster cast, against which the fagots were piled, so that they were roasted rather than burned to death. This power was exerted in Porto Rico for three hundred years.

Supreme
Power

During all of this period, from the investing of Bishop Manso with the power of Provincial Inquisitor, in 1519, until 1813, when the Inquisitor ceased to exist for a short time by virtue of the Spanish

²See Neumann, page 205.

Cortes, no man was safe from its secret influence. That its power was greater than the crown is thus set forth in the decree of the Cortes:¹ "Another notable circumstance made the power of the Inquisitors General still more unusual; this was that, without consulting the King or the Supreme Pontiff, they dictated laws, changed them, abolished them, or substituted them by others, so that there was within the nation a judge, the Inquisitor General, whose powers transcended those of the Sovereign."

In the light of these facts, it is apparent that the church cannot escape responsibility for the misgovernment of Porto Rico, since ecclesiastical dignitaries were invested with greater powers than were accorded to the civil officers appointed by the crown.

During the first few years after the Spanish conquest, the church was supported by tithes and first fruits—taxes levied and collected directly by the priests. When more money was needed to meet the expenses of the Church, it was supplied by the Government. The municipalities also gave to each priest within their immediate vicinity \$25 a month. In 1501 this plan was changed

Relation to
the Public
Funds

Priests as
Tax
Collectors

¹See Decree of Cortes of Cadiz, 1813.

so that the King's agents collected the taxes, and the church was sustained entirely from the royal treasury. The King, however, made the Bishop of Porto Rico and his successors his agents for collecting the money.

In 1511 another modification provided that the tithes should be distributed as follows: the Bishop, nine parts; the Dean and chapter, nine parts; Her Majesty, four parts; the Cathedral edifice, three parts; and the hospitals, three parts. This manner of distributing the funds seems to have been observed until 1815, when the King assumed the support of the church and ordered the discontinuance of tithes. First fruits, however, were collected until 1865.

**Distribution
of Tithes**

In 1858, the Queen abolished all special fees and taxes and forbade the priests from collecting them. This order was quite generally disobeyed, for the priests still persisted in charging for baptisms, marriages and funerals, and they also received money called surplice and candle fees. The Government continued to pay the salaries of the priests and most of the other expenses of the church until 1898. The budget for the support of the church in 1898-1899, the last

issued by the Government, was 197,945 pesos or Mexican dollars. The last budget paid by the Government was in 1897-1898 and was distributed as follows:

	PESOS
¹ Cathedral clergy.....	\$ 42,400
Parochial clergy	128,040
Ecclesiastical judiciary.....	4,200
Expense of bulls.....	62c
Conciliar seminary.....	3,000
Cathedral and parishes—materials.....	23,350
Ecclesiastical judiciary—materials.....	135
	<hr/>
	\$201,745

Besides these salaries which were paid to the clergy, other servants of the church obtained money from the public treasury. For example, sisters of charity each received 18 pesos a month for their service in behalf of the poor and in the insane asylum; the Escolapian Fathers received 12,940 pesos for managing a college in Santurce in which each pupil paid 25 pesos a month; and nuns were paid for conducting a girls' school in which the dues per scholar were from 35 to 40 pesos a month.

Not only did the church receive from the Government an annual budget for the salaries of the clergy and other church workers,

Church
Property

¹Collated by Order of the Vicario Capitalar. See Commissioner Carroll's Report, page 658.

but the Church buildings were constructed in whole or in part by public funds. The government or the municipality would give the municipality as a rule furnished most of the money and a part was raised by subscription. The municipalities also kept the buildings in repair.

**Separation
of
Church
and State**

When by American law there was a complete separation of church and state, a dispute arose as to the ownership of these properties. The municipalities in many instances claim that as the churches had been built by money raised through taxation, they belong to the people of these municipalities. In several cases the authorities claim that the churches belong to the government and are now United States property. The Catholic authorities, however, insist that all these buildings belong to the church, since they have held them undisturbed for over twenty years, which fact gives them a valid title. Moreover, some of the property which had been confiscated by and belonged to the Spanish Crown and was transferred to the American Government, is claimed by the Catholic church because it had originally been built for them. All of these cases are now in court awaiting a legal decision.

All Government support of the church

ceased when Porto Rico became a part of the United States. The Catholic church here, like in other lands where church and state are entirely separate, finds it quite a hardship to be compelled to keep her hands out of the public treasury.

Prior to 1815 non-Catholics were not permitted in Porto Rico. The "Act of Grace" of that year admitted many Protestants to the Island, but the restrictions imposed upon them the following year and continued during the Spanish rule placed them at a great disadvantage. At the time of the American occupation there were only two Protestant churches in Porto Rico—one at Ponce and the other at Vieques, both under the direction of the Church of England.

Attitude
Toward
Protestants

It follows that the Catholic church must be held responsible for the religious teaching or the lack of it among the people of Porto Rico. That it has done much good, there is no reason to doubt. That it has been notoriously derelict in duty and corrupt in its organization, the facts of history abundantly prove.

Relation to
Public
Instruction

It is true that the Government built churches in every large town and in most of the smaller towns of the Island, and

Neglect of
Rural
Population

services were maintained in them, but when it is remembered that over 75 per cent of the population is rural and that there are large numbers of mountain villages where no religious services have ever been held, and no effort put forth by the church to instruct these people, it is apparent to the casual observer that a large portion of the population has been neglected. There are many thousands of Porto Ricans who were never inside a church before Protestantism entered the Island.

As a church she must be held responsible for the ignorance of the great masses of Porto Ricans, for she has always claimed the right to educate her children. Notwithstanding the fact that church and state were practically one in Porto Rico, the census of 1899 shows that out of 659,294 who were over ten years of age, 524,878, or 79 per cent, were unable to read and write. Yet, in the face of this stupendous failure, the Bishop of Porto Rico has the audacity to oppose the public school system as introduced by the American Government. It is to the credit of the Porto Ricans that they disregard the advice of their ecclesiastical counselors, and the public schools



CATHOLIC CHURCHES

Hormigueros
Guayama



are overflowing with children whose parents are anxious for them to secure an education.

The Catholic church has also encouraged indolence. As stated before, Porto Rico observed, besides Sundays, forty legal holidays which were prescribed by the church. On these days business of all kinds was practically suspended and the natives gave themselves to having a good time.

Indolence
Encouraged

Here, as in other Catholic countries, the Church took advantage of the ignorance and credulity of the masses. A number of myths were taught by the church and accepted by the superstitious and simple-minded people as miraculous manifestations of supernatural power. One of the chief of these in Porto Rico is the legend of Monserrate. As the story goes, a man was plowing in the field near Hormigueros when the ox which he was driving turned and commenced goring him. In his distress he prayed to the Virgin Mary for help and immediately the ox fell to the ground with his legs broken. The Virgin then appeared to the man, who in gratitude promised to do whatever she commanded. Later she appeared to him again and ordered him to build a church on the hill for the purpose

Superstition
Taught

of miraculous healing. He erected it according to her orders, on a sharp peak, where it stands prominently before the people of the adjacent town and country, and named it "The Church of our Lady of Monserrate." Here the poor deluded people from all parts of the Island come to seek relief from their sufferings. They present gifts suggestive of their infirmities. Silver or gold limbs or other members of the body, eyes of precious stones, and numerous articles of great value have been presented to the church, so that it has become wealthy. The interior is richly adorned with these gifts or with articles made from them. The altar weighing sixty-six pounds, made of solid silver, and a solid gold candlestick weighing fourteen pounds, have been moulded from the gifts of persons seeking divine healing. It is claimed that the ornaments in the church are valued at more than \$100,000.

In addition to the constant stream of persons seeking relief, the Church organizes an annual pilgrimage to this shrine. Excursions are run from all parts of the Island, priests urge their parishioners to attend, thousands of pilgrims make their way

to this holy place, where the Bishop and other high ecclesiastics address them. Many cures are reported, and incidentally much gold and silver flows into the Church coffers. Superstitions of this kind can only be made to disappear as the darkness of ignorance gives place to the dawn of education and intelligence.

We have shown in our chapter on Moral Conditions that, after making due allowance for the floating Spanish population who expected to return to Spain, and who during their sojourn in Porto Rico gave rein to their baser appetites; and after considering the criminal classes, who made their homes here and helped to corrupt the natives, it must be admitted by the student of social conditions that the Church is to blame to a very great extent for the immoral status of this people. By their impure lives, the priests have caused the people to err in their judgment of moral standards. By allowing immoral men and women to remain as communicants, the Church authorities condoned their offenses. By putting barriers in the way of legal matrimony, it encouraged a widespread system of concubinage. By the failure of the priests to

teach their parishoners the vital relation between religion and daily life, they have given them a wrong conception as to what constitutes true religion. Attending mass and confession, joining in the religious processions and observing "fiesta" days by refraining from labor, giving due reverence to the priests, conforming to certain customs when within the church—these seem to represent the accepted ideas of what religion has meant to average Porto Ricans. That they did not learn the true moral significance of Christianity must be charged to the false doctrines and the bad example of their spiritual teachers—the priests of the Catholic church.

III. PROTESTANTISM

WITH the advent of the American in Porto Rico came liberty of religious thought and opportunity to worship according to the inclination of the individual. Different Protestant denominations sent their representatives to the field for the purpose of establishing their work on the Island. It was evident that some kind of an arrangement should be made whereby they could work together harmoniously and to the best advantage. The different Missionary

Boards took up the question and agreed in a general way as to the plan of campaign.

In the first place, it was decided that the two chief cities, San Juan and Ponce, should be open to all denominations for whatever work they cared to begin. In the second place, the Island was divided up among the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists, with due provision for the work of other denominations. In a general way the Presbyterians were held responsible for the evangelization of the western section of the Island, the Congregationalists the eastern section, and the Methodists and Baptists the great central section. In the third place, it was understood that whenever any evangelical denomination entered a town or village and maintained regular preaching services, the other denominations would not intrude. This last rule has applied to all evangelical denominations doing missionary work in Porto Rico, and has proved to be a beneficial arrangement. Large and small denominations are both protected from undue rivalry and from waste of energy.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Protestant missionaries were received with hos-

A Working
Plan

The
Propaganda

tility on the part of the Roman priesthood. The people were told about these heretics and the ruin they would bring to the country. Religious services were frequently interrupted and the missionary was often an object of hatred by those who were influenced by the ecclesiastical leaders. The faithful were warned not to go near the Protestant services, and dire threats were made to those who attended regardless of the warnings of the priests. This seems rather to have helped than to have hindered the work of the missionary. The people early learned that the priest under the American Government does not have the power that he possessed under Spanish rule. They found out that it was perfectly safe for them to attend religious services of any kind without fear of punishment. As a result, whenever a preaching place was opened, the people in large numbers thronged the house to hear what the minister had to say and to take part in singing Gospel hymns. At first it was largely a matter of curiosity that brought the people, but as they kept on coming they became interested in the services, and large num-

bers enrolled themselves as candidates for Church membership.

One of the chief attractions of Protestant services was the singing of Gospel songs. The people had not been accustomed to singing either church music or popular songs. In the Catholic church, they were used to hearing the chants and to take some part in singing them in the Latin language. The enthusiastic singing of hymns written in Spanish, with a message in the words that was readily understood and that appealed strongly to their emotional nature, was a decided contrast to anything that they had previously known. Those who came out of curiosity soon wanted to join in the singing, and once they had found out how easy it was to learn these songs, they became more deeply interested and more regular in their attendance. The Church music of the Protestants has been and is still a strong factor in bringing the people to the religious services and in leading them to become members of the church.

The Power
of Song

The ministers insisted that it was impossible to build up a Christian nation without first having Christian homes. No matter what professions men or women made as to conversion or change of life, they would

not be received into the church until they were willing to marry the companion that he or she had been living with illegally for years. The pastors made no charges for performing the marriage ceremony, and in many cases put themselves to great inconvenience to secure the necessary legal papers so that there might be no obstruction placed in the way of marriage. As a result of this attitude, large numbers of men and women all over the Island were legally joined together, and thus placed not only themselves but their children in a position of honor where before they had been living in dishonor, even though there was little public sentiment against such conduct. The Protestant church has emphasized the sanctity of home life in a way that was never known before to the people of this Island.

**A Moral
Force**

Not only has Protestantism been a great moral force in the Island by virtue of establishing legal homes among the people, but by its firm stand against immoral social conditions it has done much to purify the moral atmosphere. It has preached in no uncertain tones against the system of concubinage and of impurity of life among all classes. It has refused to take men and



REPRESENTATIVES OF PROTESTANTISM
An Itinerant Preacher
A Modern Church



women into its membership who have been guilty of immoral practices until they have shown evidence of a complete change of life, and have been willing so far as lay in their power to right the wrongs they had committed.

To raise a high moral standard of this kind among people who had been used to impurity of life in its priesthood, among the so-called higher classes, and quite generally among the lower classes, required great moral courage. One of the highest tributes that can be paid to the Porto Rican people is that they have responded to these appeals to their noblest nature, and the standards thus set up have called forth the devotion and loyalty of many thousands of Porto Ricans who show by their lives that they are earnestly striving to live up to this higher life that has been opened to their view.

So energetic have the missionaries been **Progress** in extending their work, and so eager have the people been to receive them, that there is not a city or large town and not many villages where Protestant services are not held regularly.

That Protestantism is having a strong

**Influence
on Character**

influence in developing character is evident on all sides. Men who were given to drinking rum have become total abstainers. Gamblers have been changed into honest men. Great changes have taken place among men and women with respect to the kind of language they use and to truthfulness of speech. Greatest of all, high standards of morality have been set up that are having a wonderful influence in attracting the people from the filth of social impurity to the beauty of a pure life. Through Protestant agencies, assisted and strengthened by the general diffusion of knowledge, Porto Rico is rapidly being regenerated, and her children will soon be as intelligent and as moral as those of any other part of the Great Republic.

CHAPTER VI

INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL SITUATION

I. INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS

THE chief occupation of the Porto Ricans is agriculture and stock raising. The Island is especially adapted to these pursuits, since the soil is fertile, the climate is mild, and there is an abundance of rain. Agriculture

There is but little manufacturing carried on here, for during the Spanish regime the policy pursued was to keep the Porto Ricans from making anything for themselves that could be manufactured in Spain. This benefited the workingmen and merchants of Spain at the expense of the Porto Ricans. Manufactories

There was not much work for the artisans of the Island, since there was but little building activity to engage masons, carpenters, painters, etc., and there were several times as many men in all the other trades as the needs of the people demanded.

Almost all of the remunerative positions were closed to the natives and were filled by Spaniards. With but few exceptions the merchants and their clerks, the land- Good Positions
Held by Span-
iards

owners and their overseers, claimed Spain as their home and remained in Porto Rico for the sake of gain and with the expectation of returning to their native land. Thus both in agriculture and commerce the door of opportunity was closed to the Porto Rican. If he turned his face toward civil, military or professional life, he received but little encouragement, for the officers of the Government, the soldiers of the Island, the school teachers and the priests were, as a rule, Spaniards. About the only thing left for the natives was the menial service of country and town.

**Wages of
Laborers**

This class of labor brought from thirty to fifty cents a day, Mexican money. Even then the laborer did not have regular work, and on some of the plantations he received his meagre pay in tickets on the owner's store, where prices were often exorbitant. These facts explain why out of a population of a million people more than three fourths of them lived in poverty. Without means to buy nourishing food, they subsisted on such fruits and vegetables as they could secure, and, as they were able, they added rice and salt codfish to their frugal fare. The pangs of hunger were



INDUSTRIAL SCENES

Wholesale Street in San Juan

Preparing a Field for Cane



often relieved by the use of rum or tobacco, and the result of such a mode of life is now discernible in the weak and anæmic condition of great numbers of the poor.

¹ The census of 1899 shows that out of a population of about half a million of persons of working age, 198,761 were engaged in agriculture, mining and fishing. It is estimated that less than 1,000 were engaged in the two latter classes, leaving about 197,761 agriculturists. There were 64,819 non-agriculturist laborers; 26,515 engaged in manufacturing and trades; 24,076 in commerce and transportation; and 2,194 in the profession class. There were unemployed 183,635—one-third of whom were men and two thirds women. These figures show that about 63 per cent of the persons employed in any regular pursuit were agriculturists. The people depended almost wholly upon the soil for their support. Every portion of the Island is capable of being cultivated from the seashore to the tops of the hills. Notwithstanding this favorable natural condition, out of a total area of ² 2,347,520 acres, only 464,361 acres, or 20 per cent, are

Occupation of
Porto Rico

¹ Census 1899

² See Governor's Report, page 38, 1901

under cultivation. Poor roads, an absent or unsympathetic landlord class, and a poverty-stricken peasant class are chiefly responsible for the existence of this unfortunate agricultural condition.

Poor
Roads

The Commissioner of Interior in his report to the Governor in 1901 states that the principal cause of these conditions is due to the poor roads. He says: ¹ "I lack command of language to express concisely and within the scope of this report the importance of good roads and bridges to the future development of the material interests of the Island, the prosperity and happiness of the people. Spanish officials promised a great deal and planned much, but executed very little. As a result, the desire of the wealthy and favored few to keep the masses poor and dependent, that the price of labor might ever be low, was surely accomplished.

"An observant American coming to Porto Rico and visiting the interior, revels in admiration of the magnificent scenery, and is duly impressed by evidences of the exuberant fertility of the soil and its adaptability

¹ See Governor's Report, 1901, page 315

to the cultivation of all sorts of tropical products. He meets the people by the way, and if at first he wonders why, amidst such surroundings, so many people should appear to be victims of hunger and starvation, he learns without asking that the chief cause for the non-employment of labor, for abandoned or scantily cultivated farms and untouched areas of land presenting a jungle of trees, plants and vines in mute testimony of its richness, lies in the impossibility of reaching a market with the products of the soil." Poor roads, however, do not give a full explanation.

¹ With all the untilled acres of fertile land, the staple food of the people, rice, which can be raised in Porto Rico, was the chief article of import. In 1897 about 78,000,000 pounds of rice were imported into this Island. This had to be carried into the interior over roads that were considered too bad to bring products to market. While poor roads contributed to the deplorable economic condition, the chief cause, in our judgment, is found in the fact that there was scarcely any middle class. The

¹ See *Estadística General*, 1897

population consisted of wealthy land-owners and the dependent poverty-stricken laborers who were kept down by those in power.

Americans
Welcomed

Such were the class distinctions and the unfavorable industrial conditions that existed in Porto Rico when Spanish rule, which had lasted for over four centuries, came to an end and the American Republic assumed control.

The Americans were gladly welcomed by the Porto Ricans because they represented liberty, prosperity and opportunity. This feeling of cordiality in large measure has been supplanted by one of discontent or open hostility. What has caused this change? The United States has done much for this people, educationally and morally, which we have already discussed in previous chapters. What she has done politically, we shall take up later on. At this point, we shall consider the question, What has been the result of American rule upon the industrial conditions?

The Coffee
Trade

The three great crops of the Island are coffee, tobacco, and sugar. ¹ In 1897, the value of the coffee exported was 12,222,600 pesos. Spain received almost one third of

¹ See Estadística General 1897

Industrial and Political Situation 131

this amount, or a value of 3,563,921 pesos. Other European countries bought the remainder with the exception of about one five-hundredth part, valued at 24,957 pesos, which was received by the United States. The important coffee market for Porto Rico was Spain, the United States buying so little Porto Rican coffee that it need scarcely be considered.

Shortly after Spain relinquished her possession of Porto Rico, she placed a tariff on coffee from the Island, which was not quite prohibitive, but which was disastrous to the coffee industry. Prices paid for coffee in Porto Rico were so low that the planters could scarcely afford to market the berries. This worked great hardship among the laborers, many of whom were thrown out of employment, and large numbers could hardly earn enough money to keep them from starving. ¹ The value of the coffee exported in 1901 was \$3,195,662 as against an average value of annual shipment from 1892 to 1896 of \$10,872,000.

Coffee
Market
Lost

In addition to the distress caused by the loss of their market, the coffee planters suffered a great disaster through the hurri-

Coffee
Crops
Injured

¹ Governor's Report, 1903, page 34

cane of 1899. The storm swept over the Island with such fury that coffee trees were destroyed, buildings were blown down, much of the soil on the coffee plantations was washed down into the valleys, and the coffee industry was paralyzed. Many of the planters had mortgaged their crops and were unable to secure more money to put their farms in repair. This resulted in great additions to the already large army of the unemployed. Because of these two great blows to the coffee industry, economic conditions have been much depressed throughout the Island.

It is true that these conditions have been much relieved by the increased activity in the sugar industry, but the area of the cane-fields is very limited compared with that devoted to the growing of coffee. In 1897, the value of the sugar exported was over \$4,000,000, while in 1902-3, the value had increased to over \$7,500,000. This has helped to counteract the financial distress caused by the disasters to the coffee crop.

There has also been a considerable amount of American money invested in fruit farms. It is too early to state whether these ventures will prove successful or not, since time

enough has not yet elapsed to produce fruit-bearing trees. If fruit farms are scientifically cultivated in Porto Rico, and adequate transportation facilities are afforded, there seems to be no reason why this tropical Island lying so near to the New York market should not become rich as a producer of tropical fruits and vegetables.

There has been quite an increase in the amount of tobacco grown and exported since the American occupation. This crop is continually enlarging and adding to the wealth of the Island. Normal commercial conditions, however, have not yet been reached. This is shown by comparison of the value of imports and exports in different years. ¹ In 1897, the exports amounted to \$18,574,678, and the imports to \$17,858,063, giving a trade balance of \$716,615 in favor of Porto Rico. Every year after this until 1903, the trade balance was against her. In 1903, the value of imports was \$14,179,575, and the value of exports \$14,866,644, giving for the first time under American rule a balance of trade in favor of the Island. Even with this very great improvement over the other years of American occupation, it will be noticed

¹ Governor's Report 1903, page 22

that both imports and exports fall short more than three and a half million dollars apiece of what they were for the last year that Spain ruled.

If, in the prosperous year of 1897, there were nearly 200,000 persons unemployed, it can readily be seen that this number was greatly augmented during these years of hard times. It is, therefore, scarcely to be wondered at that these persons blame the ruling power for the cause of their poverty and their distress. This is only human nature and what we could logically expect in any country. It is not just to dismiss the complaints and the grievances of the Porto Ricans by calling them ingrates and incapable of appreciating what has been done for them. The cause of the strong anti-American feeling that is found among some classes of Porto Ricans is due very largely to economic conditions which would influence the people of any other land in much the same way.

On the other hand, we must not forget that the United States has done much to relieve these unfortunate conditions. In the Organic Act approved April 12, 1900, it was provided ¹ "That the duties and taxes col-

¹ Organic Act, Section 4

lected in Porto Rico in pursuance of this Act, less the cost of collecting the same, and the gross amount of all collections of duties and taxes in the United States upon articles of merchandise coming from Porto Rico, shall not be covered into the general fund of the Treasury, but shall be held as a separate fund, and shall be placed at the disposal of the President to be used for the government and benefit of Porto Rico." Congress voted \$2,000,000 for the refunding of the duties paid from 1898 to this date.

Thus the Government provided that customs receipts which are used in the United States for Federal purposes only, should in this case be used for local needs. The first appropriation was the sum of ¹\$200,000 which was paid to the treasurer of Porto Rico, for the exclusive use of the Department of Education for school extension in Porto Rico. This has been added to until in 1904, the amount used in building school-houses was over half a million dollars.² The rest of this fund was devoted chiefly to the building of good roads. This gift from the national treasury to the treasury of Porto Rico ought to be, and no doubt is, duly appreciated. The Commissioner of Interior

Use of
this Gift

¹ Governor's Report, 1904, page 33

² Governor's Report, 1901, page 279

stated that good roads were an absolute necessity to the prosperity of the Island. The Commissioner of Education pointed out the fact that Spain only gave one school building in Porto Rico to the American Government, and he emphasized the immediate need of constructing schoolhouses. The liberality of the Federal Government has made possible the construction of more than twice as many miles of good roads as Spain built during four hundred years of occupancy. It has also resulted in the dotting of the whole Island with schoolhouses where the children can be comfortably seated and be given an American public school education.

**Continued
Favors**

Nor has the United States Government been satisfied with extending this much assistance. She has provided that all the regular customs receipts of Porto Rico shall be applied annually for the benefit of the Islanders. This is a favor that has not been granted to any other part of the United States. In this respect Porto Rico has been most kindly considered by the National Government.

**A Harmful
Restriction**

In April 1900, Congress, with the best of motives, provided for the protection of the

Porto Ricans from greedy corporations. It was thought that the land of Porto Rico should be owned by her own people and not by large land companies. It was, therefore, enacted that no corporation should control more than 500 acres of land, and any person owning a share in one agricultural corporation was prohibited from owning any stock of another corporation engaged in agriculture. Instead of a blessing, this has proved a curse to the Island. Porto Ricans were too poor to develop the land themselves, and what was needed most was foreign capital. But capital was unwilling to go to Porto Rico under these restrictions. To profitably run a sugar plantation and mill from 5,000 acres to 20,000 acres are needed. Large tracts of land are also needed for tobacco, coffee and fruit farms. American capital has been invested in some of these enterprises, but they have had to violate the spirit, if not the letter, of this prohibitive law. In the light of its results, it is eminently desirable that this harmful restriction should at once be removed.

Porto Rico has made several requests of the United States that have not been

Requests
not Granted

U. S. M.

granted, but this is not due to want of interest, or lack of desire to improve the economic condition of Porto Rico, but because the petitions were not in accord with the policy of the Government.

For example, to help the coffee growers, two plans were proposed. One was to have the United States place a tariff on coffee imported from foreign countries. This would tax all coffee drinkers in the nation for the sake of providing a market for the coffee of Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines, which produce but a small percentage of the total amount imported into the United States. The other proposal was for the Federal Government to pay a bounty on coffee raised in Porto Rico. Neither of these propositions commended themselves to the people of the United States and no special help has been afforded the coffee planters. What would seem to be a saner solution of this problem would be the cultivation of the coffee plantations according to modern methods so that the output could be largely increased and the planter be placed in a position where he could compete in the different coffee markets of the world.

Another movement that was very popu-

lar among the Porto Ricans was the effort to secure a large insular loan for the promotion of agriculture. This loan was to be made directly by Congress or by private parties with the consent of Congress. The movement failed because the Insular Council and the House of Delegates could not agree upon a plan for the distribution of the funds in case they could be secured.

That Porto Rico needs help in securing better economic conditions is apparent to all who have studied this question. How to render assistance, and at the same time make the people more self-reliant, is a problem that has not yet been solved. In the first place, it would be well if the Federal Government would remove the restrictions against the large investment of capital, then to render increased assistance in providing adequate school facilities for all the children of school age. In a few years Porto Rico ought to have an educated, intelligent population abundantly able to work out their own problems and to dignify labor which is now regarded as belonging to the peon class. It is our conviction that what Porto Rico needs more than any other one thing in improving her economic condition

A Problem

is a large class of intelligent workingmen who are not averse to earnest, diligent labor.

II. THE POLITICAL SITUATION

Privileges
Granted by
the Spanish
Government

DURING the centuries of Spanish rule, Porto Ricans had very little opportunity for the exercise of their political tendencies. Not until 1870 were they given the specific right of suffrage, and then it was so limited that a very few, about 20,000, were permitted to vote for provincial deputies and municipal councilors, who were practically nominated by the Crown.

In 1897, owing, no doubt, to the pressure that was being applied by the United States to Spain in the interests of Cuba, an autonomous form of government was granted to Porto Rico. This extended the franchise to male Spaniards over twenty-five years of age who had resided in the municipality for two years—criminals and bankrupts excepted. The voting population then numbered about 150,000. The only election under this law was held on March 27, 1898. This was said to have been manipulated by Sagasta, the Prime Minister, so that all those elected were his nominees. This so-

called self-government had just been started when the United States army of occupation took charge of the Island.

¹ The military government provided the following qualifications of electors:

American
Military
Provisions

1. He must be a *bona fide* male resident, over twenty-one years of age, and must have resided in Porto Rico for two years and in the municipality for six months previous to the election. Or he must be a citizen or subject of a foreign country, who, fulfilling the requirements stated above as to sex, age and residence in the municipality, has resided five years in Porto Rico, and has, under oath, renounced his foreign allegiance and declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States.

2. He must be a taxpayer of record, who, subsequent to July 11, 1898, and previous to October 12, 1899, paid at least \$1 of some kind of regular tax for the support of the Government, not including payments for licenses, fees, fines, duties, imports, and other temporary charges; taxes paid on the property of a wife, minor child, or member of a firm or corporation to qualify the respective husband, father or partner as an

¹ See Military Government Porto Rico

eligible taxpayer. Or he must be able to read and write some language.

The elections held under the military government were the first in Porto Rico where there was an honest effort to secure just returns. Where irregularities occurred, elections were repeated. Where there were attempts at fraud, a strict investigation was made, and in one case at least a criminal prosecution followed. Partisan spirit was intensely bitter during the elections and has remained so ever since.

A Warning The political leaders were intent upon securing selfish ends and only the strong hand of the Government prevented deadly riots. The result of the voting showed that 51,650 votes were cast. In commenting upon the qualifications of voters in Porto Rico, General Davis says: ¹ "It seems absolutely essential that the franchise in Porto Rico be restricted on some basis that shall prevent the political control from passing into the hands of the vast horde of the ignorant, who have no conception of the duties of citizenship, a condition that is recognized and admitted by the most intelligent and patriotic Porto Ricans. . . . If universal

¹ Military Government Porto Rico, page 114

or manhood suffrage be given to the Porto Ricans, bad results are almost sure to follow. The vast majority of the people are no more fit to take part in self-government than are our reservation Indians, from whom the suffrage is withheld unless they pay taxes. They certainly are far inferior in the social, intellectual and industrial scale to the Chinese, who, for very good reasons, are forbidden to land on our shores. The ignorant masses will be manipulated and controlled and corrupted by the political bosses, just as they were accustomed to be by their former masters. They will be subservient to their new masters, and whatever party can sway and dictate to the masses will control their votes."

Notwithstanding this word of warning, the law was so constructed that at the first election under the civil government there was practically universal suffrage. It reads as follows: ¹ "Any male citizen over the age of twenty-one years who, on the day of registration, produces to the Board of Registry, a tax receipt showing the payment of any kind of taxes for the last six months of the year in which the election is held."

Provisions of
the Civil
Government

¹Military Government Porto Rico, Page 114

All that was necessary was a receipt showing payment of some kind of taxes within six months from the day of registration. The lowest tax is three cents for the privilege of depositing a basket of vegetables on the floor of the market place and selling them. A receipt for three cents entitles the holder to the right of suffrage. The result was a registry list of 158,924 voters.

Two Political
Parties

Immediately after the American occupation, the people of Porto Rico divided themselves into two parties—the Republican and the Federal. There was very little difference in the principles announced in their platforms. They were alike in declaring their loyalty to the United States, in desiring a Territorial Government, and at an early date, Statehood. Both declared themselves to be in favor of universal suffrage, free schools, American money, free trade with the United States, and in hearty sympathy with the American judicial system. In addition to these statements, the Federals advocated local autonomy, the granting of larger powers to the city councils, the chartering of banks, and claimed to be the champion of the laboring man.

The Republicans advocated free speech

and a free press, the American system of taxation, and the teaching of English in the public schools. The Republicans, up to 1904, generally supported the American administration, while the Federals more or less actively opposed it.

The most intense feeling is indulged in by the members of the different parties. Men of one party frequently will not speak to those of the other. The newspapers use the most intemperate language in regard to their political opponents. Hatreds are intense and lead to riots. Just before the November elections in 1900 a number of clashes occurred which resulted in bloodshed. In San Juan, mob law prevailed for several days. A printing press was destroyed, hundreds of shots were fired, the police were helpless, and the city was at the mercy of the rioters. When the Federals realized that they would be defeated at the polls, they issued orders for all Federals to refrain from voting. The very thing that General Davis had predicted had already come to pass. The ignorant, unthinking masses followed blindly the leadership of a demagogue without giving a thought to

Bitter
Feeling

principles of government or to the good of the Island.

In 1902, the Federalists were in the field again, and ante-election hatreds were stirred up. Intense excitement prevailed, riots broke out, and blood flowed. As the Republicans had supported the Government and had the majority of votes, they were given a majority of the election officers. It is claimed that there was considerable fraud and some intimidation on the part of the Republicans. However that may be, the returns showed that five of the seven legislative districts had gone Republican, and this fact increased the animosity of the party which had been defeated. The excitable nature and the uncompromising temperament of Latin Americans make it difficult for them to learn the lesson of government by majority rule.

Change of
Party Lines

In the spring of 1904, the leader of the Federal party, who then lived in New York, met the representatives of his party and advised them to disband and form a new patriotic organization that would refrain from voting and would seek only the good of Porto Rico. This advice was followed, the Federal party was dissolved, and a non-

voting Union party was organized. This created great dissatisfaction among the former Federals, and before the time of the election, the Union party had a ticket in the field and five of the seven districts returned Union majorities.

On July 4th preceding the 1904 elections, a new Governor was inaugurated. Each party sought the favor of the new executive. It soon became rumored that he was inclined to listen to the leaders of the Union party. Governor Winthrop's friends claimed that he was impartial and decided questions without any partisan bias. In the November elections, the Insular Government took measures to prevent disorders and fraud at the polls. The Unionists claim that this secured an honest election which resulted in victory for their party. The Republicans charge the Government with using its influence in favor of their opponents and thus caused a panic among the large number of the peon class that had been accustomed to vote the Republican ticket. Partially as a result of this election, the Republican party is now strongly against the government, and vies with its rival in trying to secure favor among the

Governor
Winthrop

voters by means of bitter denunciations of the American rulers.

Anti-
Americanism

At the present time, therefore, we find the great majority of the people of Porto Rico either dissatisfied with the American Government or openly hostile to it. In a preceding chapter, we pointed out that the chief cause of discontent is found in the economic conditions that have obtained during American rule. The natural way for the expression of industrial discontent is through political channels. It is so in our own States. If a panic occurs during a Republican administration, that party is held responsible for it in the minds of the great masses of the people. Or if there is a financial depression during a Democratic administration, the people call the Democrats to account for it. During the seven years of American rule in Porto Rico, the people have been subjected to hard times. It is only natural that they should find fault with the Government, and then, when relief failed to come, to assume a hostile attitude toward it. The probabilities are that if Porto Rico had enjoyed favorable industrial conditions, there would have been little fault found with the political management of Insular affairs. It is well

to keep this in mind as we study the political grievances of the people.

The Insular Government is vested in a House of Delegates elected by the people, an Executive Council of eleven members appointed by the President of the United States, and the Governor, who is also appointed by the President. Five of the members of the Executive Council are Porto Ricans. The other six are Americans, who are the heads of Government departments. They are the Secretary, Attorney General, Treasurer, Auditor, Commissioner of Interior, and Commissioner of Education.

**Present
Government**

At first this form of government seemed satisfactory to the Porto Ricans. To give to people who had exercised but little power in self-government the entire lower House and five of the eleven members of the upper House seemed a liberal concession on the part of Congress. But as the years have gone, there has developed a strong feeling that greater legislative power should be given to the people of the Island. Perhaps this was best expressed in the Convention of Municipal Delegates that met in San Juan, July 25, 1905. They petitioned that the executive and legislative functions of

**Self Govern-
ment Desired**

the Government be separated. That is, that the heads of departments should not be members of the upper House. They requested that the members of the upper House as well as the lower House be elected by the people, and the heads of departments be appointed by the Governor with the approval of the upper House.

American
Encourage-
ment

To some Americans who are all sympathy with immediate self-government, these requests seem reasonable, and they urge that they be granted. It ought not to be forgotten that many felt the same way toward the emancipated slaves at the close of the Civil War. Universal negro suffrage followed and the disastrous results both to black and white men of the South is a matter of history. We have already made the mistake in Porto Rico of putting the ballot into the hands of one hundred thousand men who can neither read nor write and who know no more about self-government than the ex-slave did at the close of the Civil War. Now, shall we turn over the entire legislature of the Island to people who have had so little instruction or experience in American statesmanship?

It is believed by many who have studied

the problem of self-government for Porto Rico that already more power has been given the people than they are prepared to exercise wisely. It was a great mistake to bestow the right of suffrage upon perhaps two thirds of the voters of this Island, because of their ignorance and their utter inability to understand the issues before the people. To have two such votes for every intelligent vote is a condition that is ominous to the honest administration of any government.

Governor Hunt who was sometimes charged with being too conciliatory in his attitude toward the Porto Ricans and of having ultra-optimistic views of their progress in self-government, has this to say:

¹ "It is probable that a majority of all the people want Territorial Government. But those of us who have participated in affairs for several years unanimously believe that the present form of government ought not to be changed now. It is liberal in its extension of political autonomy and most generous in its financial benefits. The creation of a house of delegates conferred vast power upon the people, considering their limited

¹ Report of Governor of Porto Rico, 1903, page 13

government in the past. It is perhaps the severest test to which they are being put, and the legislative sessions will be anxious times for years to come."

Advice Not
Wanted

During the first few sessions of the legislature there was a desire to be directed somewhat by the Governor and the Executive Council. Now the delegates seem to feel that they know better than any one else what laws should be passed. If they are not able to carry their bills through the Executive Council, they sulk and refuse to attend to any further business. This was strikingly demonstrated in the special session held in 1904. The previous session had passed an agricultural loan bill and satisfactory arrangements were made in the United States for floating the loan. The Governor then called a special session to complete negotiations for the loan and to determine what disposition should be made of the money. The House of Delegates were determined that a large part of it should be loaned to the farmers to pay off their mortgages. The Executive Council would not agree to this scheme of the government going into a mortgage business, and refused to authorize the loan for that purpose. The



PATRIOTIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Fourth of July Celebration
Public School Parade



House of Delegates then decided to do no further business. The Governor called the attention of the House to a clerical error by which the Government was losing a large sum annually on the internal revenue tax. The previous sessions had imposed a tax of a certain sum per hundred cigars. In copying, an extra cipher had been added by the clerk making it read per thousand. Notwithstanding the fact that the delegates knew that it was a clerical error and would mean a large loss for the Insular Government, because of their anger at the Executive Council, they would not correct the mistake. It was not until the session was almost ready to adjourn that some of the leaders took the matter up and had it adjusted by a majority of one vote. Should men capable of such action as this have the full responsibility of the government of one million souls placed in their hands at once? It is hoped by many of Porto Rico's friends that the American Government will not place more power in the hands of the native politicians until they show favorable signs of being able to administer it wisely.

Another political grievance of the Islanders is the decision of the United States

**American
Citizenship**

Court that Porto Ricans are not American citizens. They have lost their citizenship in Spain, they are not an independent nation, now they learn that they are not citizens of the United States. They belong to no country, they are waifs among the nations of the world. They cannot be naturalized because they are not foreigners. They cannot be admitted to the privileges of American citizens, for they are neither native-born nor adopted Americans. Is it any wonder that this wounds the pride of the Porto Rican and gives rise to hard feelings against a Government that permits such unjust discrimination? Congress should take immediate action in this matter and give to Porto Ricans their just rights—American citizenship without any restrictions.

Americans in
Porto Rico

Another cause of political discontent is due to the personnel of some of the American officials. Without exception all the Governors, both military and civil, have been men of high moral standing who had the best interests of Porto Rico at heart. Some criticisms have been made in regard to policies pursued, but the motives were always of the best and due credit has been given to the integrity of the Executive.

With but few exceptions, the heads of the departments have also been men who fairly represented American official life. In several instances, Commissioners were accused of having personal interests in public contracts, but, as a rule, there has been remarkable freedom from charges of graft.

There have been some officials, however, who have disgraced both themselves and their country. An American judge was said to have been in close relationship to one of the worst saloons and gambling dens on the Island. Several high officials in the Army and Navy were implicated in smuggling liquor from St. Thomas. An officer of the Marine Corps got drunk and almost raised a riot in the streets of San Juan. An officer of the Army was found in a disreputable part of the city where he was run over by a street car, presumably while he was under the influence of liquor. A special United States Commissioner was notoriously given to drink. One of the men in high civil position is said to be partially under the influence of liquor a large part of his time. An employee in the treasury department embezzled the funds of a prominent social club. One of the latest ap-

pointees to the head of a department got drunk on the boat going down, continued in that condition for quite a while after his arrival, and after remaining there for several weeks much of which time he was under the influence of liquor, he was recalled. These are a few examples of men who should have represented our government, deliberately misrepresenting it. If you add to this list the drunkenness of the sailors, the financial sharks and dishonest tradesmen, the scum of society, both men and women, that follow in the wake of an army and do not always leave with it, you can see why the best class of Porto Ricans do not have an exalted opinion of Americans and are not particularly anxious to have them as teachers in self-government.

Taxation Another cause of political discontent is due to the system of taxation. Under Spanish law taxes were levied upon the revenue. Under American law, it is levied upon the property. Many abuses and misunderstandings have crept in during this change. Persons who never paid taxes before remonstrate against doing so now. Very few will question, however, the wisdom of this change. When once the system is under-

stood and justly put into execution, this source of friction will disappear.

There are a number of minor difficulties in the way of a people accustomed to Spanish life and mode of operation, adjusting themselves to American standards. These do not need to be taken up in detail. They will disappear of themselves as a closer relationship is formed between Porto Ricans and Americans. We, therefore, reaffirm our believe that, while some political matters need immediate adjustment, the anti-American sentiment in Porto Rico is due to industrial rather than political causes. Once the economic conditions of the Island become prosperous, the political troubles will rapidly disappear.

SUMMARY

We believe that Porto Rico is on the highway to ultimate success in her efforts to become a worthy member of the sisterhood of States. In view of the many discouraging conditions that have been set forth, it perhaps would be well for us to state the basis of this belief.

1. The Public School.

The establishment of the American public school system forms a basis for an intel-

ligent citizenship. Already 60,000 children are annually receiving a common school education. There are in round numbers 1,200 teachers, 120 of whom are Americans, and all the Porto Rican teachers have some knowledge of English. This means that the rising generation will be able to read and think for themselves. It means also that, as these boys and girls become acquainted with American institutions and American ideals, the present antagonisms and misunderstandings will rapidly disappear. The common schools in Porto Rico as in other parts of our nation will prove a strong force in cultivating patriotism and loyalty to our Republican form of government.

2. Separation of Church and State.

The union of Church and State has ever proved disastrous to the nations which have enforced such a law. Porto Rico is released from ecclesiastical bondage. Religious beliefs can now be accepted or rejected as individuals wish. Freedom of worship, and its natural companions, freedom of speech and freedom of the press, are proving great boons for the development of sturdy and independent characters. This is one of Porto Rico's great needs. After four centuries of paternalism both in Church and State, Porto Ricans are just beginning to feel

“that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Although many abuse this newly acquired liberty, there is no doubt but that there are rapidly developing strong independent thinkers in matters sacred and secular.

3. Home life.

The great impetus that has been given to the establishment of legal homes and the development of home life is already producing very satisfactory results. The children are better clad, the little shacks are having furniture placed in them, books and papers are finding their way into these homes of the lowly, and there is a noticeable improvement in the morals of the people. As the home is the unit of national or community life, if its standard be raised, then that of the whole community is elevated. This is what is taking place in all parts of Porto Rico. The rapidly rising moral tone of family life augurs well for the future of this people.

4. Economic Conditions.

The constantly increasing trade relations with other parts of the United States is

helping to overcome the present unfortunate industrial affairs of the Island and will eventually bring to Porto Rico its share of prosperity. A comparison of imports and exports between the year 1898 and 1904 shows the increase in these trade relations. In 1898 our imports from Porto Rico amounted to \$2,382,170; in 1904, they were \$12,963,483, a gain of over ten and one half millions of dollars. In 1898, we sold them \$1,404,004, while in 1904, the amount was \$11,934,978, another gain of more than ten and a half millions of dollars. In these facts there is hope.

Quite a large sum of American money has already been invested in Porto Rico, and if Congress repeals the pernicious anti-monopoly law, there will undoubtedly be a much larger investment of American capital in the Island. The injury wrought by the change of currency is now largely a thing of the past. The system of taxation is rapidly becoming a just and equitable reality. The wages of workingmen are in the ascendancy, and there is every reason to believe that, with a little aid from Congress, hard times will soon disappear from Porto Rico.

5. Nobility of labor.

Another of the hopeful signs is the change of sentiment toward manual labor. Under the old regime, it was considered beneath the dignity of respectable persons to do any kind of manual labor—that was reserved for servants and peons. This was the old Spanish idea of nobility, and it will take time and education to eradicate it. There are some agencies at work that are already having an influence upon public opinion. Chief among these, perhaps, are the industrial schools that have been established in connection with the public school system. In these institutions the boys are taught how to use tools. While not claiming to make trained mechanics of these boys, they are given a taste of this kind of work, and with the instruction they here receive, they can soon become skilled workmen. The girls are taught domestic science, sewing and other kindred occupations. In addition to these industrial schools, the agricultural school at Rio Piedras trains the boys in scientific farming. The results of the teaching of this school, and the nineteen other agricultural schools of the rural dis-

tricts, will undoubtedly help in the future development of this fertile Island.

The normal school at Rio Piedras is also doing an excellent work in training both young men and young women to teach the schools of the Island according to the best methods now in use in other parts of the United States.

With these agencies preparing the boys and girls for useful citizenship, is there not good reason to believe in the future of Porto Rico?

6. Politics.

Politics will always be a disturbing element among people of the Porto Rican temperament. However, as they gain confidence in the ballot as a means of deciding their differences of opinions, as they insist upon the integrity of the judiciary, as they learn to use wisely the power that is in their own hands, there is no reason for grave fears from this source. The present political unrest is due largely to economic conditions, and in part to the anomalous position of Porto Ricans in the matter of citizenship. As these difficulties are adjusted, a much better spirit is sure to prevail. We believe that it will be but a com-

paratively short time,—perhaps in this generation,—until Porto Rico shall demonstrate her fitness for self-government and shall take her place among the other States of this Nation.

Our self-imposed task of portraying the Porto Rico of to-day is finished. We have given the results of careful investigation and first-hand information. We have tried to keep our promise to give facts as we found them. Some errors may have been recorded, but an earnest effort has been made to be accurate. We send out this book with the hope that it may help its readers to a clearer conception of present conditions in our new Island possession, and that it may assist in developing a deeper sympathy for a people struggling upward in a new life.

CHAPTER VII

FURTHER PROGRESS UNDER AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION

DURING the four years that have elapsed since the preceding chapters were written, substantial progress has been made in Porto Rico in the political, educational, moral, and industrial life of the people.

Political Parties

The two chief political parties are still the Union and the Republican, but there are now several smaller organizations that take part in the elections. The general policies of the two major parties remain unchanged, the Union being considered the Anti-American and the Republican the American party. The Union has been in control since 1904. Governor Post, who succeeded Governor Winthrop, was believed to be favorable to the Union party. This won for him the enmity of the Republican leaders, who would naturally have been his supporters. The Union leaders worked in harmony with the governor only so long as he granted their demands. When he refused to give all they asked it brought about deadlocks, the

last one of which, in the spring of 1909, was so serious as to call for a special message to Congress from the President of the United States. This message is quite an illuminating document as to what the United States has done for Porto Rico, and may be found at the close of this chapter.

Porto Ricans have not yet been granted American citizenship, although they persistently appeal for it, and President Roosevelt strongly urged it in one of his last messages to Congress.

There are Americans still holding prominent government positions in Porto Rico who are severely criticised for their political policies and their private lives. This criticism comes not only from the natives but from the better class of Americans living on the island. It is to be regretted that our representatives are not always men of clean and sober lives.

Undesirable
Americans

Education in Porto Rico has made rapid strides every year since the establishment of the American public school system. In our chapter on education there is a brief review of the progress made from 1899 to 1904. It is interesting to compare the figures of 1904 with those of 1909. In 1904 there were 1,113

Public Schools

common schools, with an enrollment of 61,168, and an average daily attendance of 41,798. In 1909 there were 1,912 common schools, with an enrollment of 114,367, and an average daily attendance of 72,776.¹ The number of schools taught wholly in English has increased from a few graded schools in 1904 to a total of 429 in 1909. The Commissioner of Education gives a résumé of the progress made in the public schools of Porto Rico during the years 1908 and 1909, which appears at the close of this chapter.

Religious activity under American protection has spread to all parts of the island. The Catholic Church, aroused by the work of Protestant missionaries, has been adjusting itself to the new conditions. Unworthy priests have been removed, charitable institutions are better managed, the spiritual interests of the communicants are receiving more care, and in many respects the Catholic Church is greatly improved over what it was during the Spanish régime.

The Catholic
Church

Protestantism

Protestantism has been an aggressive force in Porto Rico ever since the island came into the possession of the United States. During the last four years religious services

¹Commissioner's Leaflet, 1909.

have been increased in number until they have been established in every village. Schools have been opened where the government was unable to provide them, orphanages and hospitals minister to physical needs, Sunday schools are training young people to higher standards of morality, and the verdict of thousands of Porto Ricans is that Protestantism has been and is a great uplifting power among the people.

Industrial conditions have been steadily **Commerce** improving, as the following comparisons will show: the total imports had increased from \$9,366,230 in 1901 to \$25,825,665 in 1908; in the same period the exports had risen from \$8,583,967 to \$30,644,490; the value of sugar exported had increased from \$4,715,611 in 1901 to \$18,690,504 in 1908; of tobacco, from \$681,642 to \$5,410,195; coffee, from \$118,694 to \$4,304,609; citrus fruits, from \$84,475 to \$675,255.

The government has persistently pushed **Roads** forward the construction of good roads. The Spanish built 276.5 kilometers of macadam roads during their entire period of rulership in Porto Rico. In the first ten years of American domination, 613.7 kilometers were built. Many substantial bridges have been

constructed also, and rich agricultural sections that were formerly inaccessible have been opened to the markets.

Public Works

During the years of 1908 and 1909 irrigation has been undertaken by the government on the southern side of the island and large tracts of arid land have been changed into fertile fields.

Other public works deserve special mention, such as the extension of the railroad and trolley systems, the dredging of San Juan harbor, the construction of telephone lines, and the erection of many public buildings. There has been a constant improvement in practically all lines of industrial activity.

The friends of Porto Rico note with pleasure each advance made by the people of this island. It is their earnest wish that the Porto Ricans shall soon be acknowledged as legal citizens of the United States, and that the coming generation may become so thoroughly "Americanized" that Congress will add another star to our flag to represent the State of Porto Rico. Porto Ricans can speed this day by cooperating with the government in its efforts to help the people rather than by attempting to obstruct.

TWO YEARS' PROGRESS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION IN PORTO RICO

(Commissioner's Leaflet, 1909)

The number of common schools increased from 1,139 to 1,912; increase, 67.8 per cent. (By "common school" is meant a teacher and group of pupils.)

Total enrollment in common schools increased from 71,669 to 114,367; increase, 60.5 per cent.

Average daily attendance in common schools increased from 44,218 to 72,776; increase, 64.6 per cent.

Municipalities in which secondary instruction is given increased from three to eight.

Enrollment in secondary schools increased from 182 to 321; increase, 84 per cent.

Night schools increased from 98 to 118; increase, 20.4 per cent.

Schools taught wholly in English increased from 202 to 429; increase, 114 per cent.

Cost of maintenance of public schools for school year 1906-07, \$832,588; for the year 1908-09, \$1,146,619; increase in expense, 37.7 per cent.

Number of school buildings erected during the first nine years of American occupation, 101, at a cost of \$519,025.

Number constructed during the past two years, 89, at a cost of \$241,814.

Government scholarships for students studying in the United States increased from 45 to 59.

Government scholarships for students studying in the normal department of the University of Porto Rico increased from 28 to 75.

Government scholarships for students studying in the high schools of the island increased from 50 to 100.

Morrill fund secured for the University of Porto Rico.

Plan of promotion of pupils in graded schools each six weeks instead of annually, introduced throughout the island.

Extra year added to the course in rural schools.

Kindergartens established.

Local supervising officers increased from 19 to 35.

Salaries of 737 teachers increased an average of \$75 each.

School playgrounds established in 17 municipalities.

School banks established in 275 schools.

School libraries established in 57 towns and barrios.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

An emergency has arisen in Porto Rico which makes it necessary for me to invite the attention of the Congress to the affairs of that island, and to recommend legislation at the present extra session amending the act under which the island is governed.

The regular session of the legislative assembly of Porto Rico adjourned March 11 last without passing the usual appropriation bills. A special session of the assembly was at once convened by the governor, but after three days, on March 16, it again adjourned without making the appropriations. This leaves the island government without provision for its support after June 30 next. The situation presented is, therefore, of unusual gravity.

The present government of Porto Rico

was established by what is known as the Foraker Act, passed April 12, 1900, and taking effect May 1, 1900. Under that act the chief executive is a governor appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. A secretary, attorney-general, treasurer, auditor, commissioner of the interior, and commissioner of education, together with five other appointees of the President, constitute the Executive Council. The Executive Council must have in its membership not less than five native Porto Ricans. The legislative power is vested in the legislative assembly, which has two coördinate branches. The first of these is the Executive Council just described, and the second is the House of Delegates, a popular and representative body, with members elected by the qualified electors of the seven districts into which the island is divided.

The statute directing how the expenses of government are to be provided leaves some doubt whether this function is not committed solely to the Executive Council, but in practice the legislative assembly has made appropriations for all the expenses other than for salaries fixed by Congress, and it is too late to reverse that construction.

Ever since the institution of the present assembly, the House of Delegates has uniformly held up the appropriation bills until the last minute of the regular session, and has sought to use the power to do so as a means of compelling the concurrence of the Executive Council in legislation which the House desired.

In the last regular legislative assembly, the House of Delegates passed a bill dividing the island into several counties and providing county governments; a bill to establish manual training schools; a bill for the establishment of an agricultural bank; a bill providing that vacancies in the offices of mayors and councilmen be filled by a vote of the municipal councils instead of by the governor, and a bill putting in the control of the largest taxpayers in each municipal district the selection in great part of the assessors of property.

The Executive Council declined to concur in these bills. It objected to the agricultural bank bill on the ground that the revenues of the island were not sufficient to carry out the plan proposed, and to the manual training school bill because in plain violation of the Foraker Act. It objected to the change

in the law concerning the appraisement of property on the ground that the law was intended to put too much power, in respect of the appraisement of property for taxation, in the hands of those having the most property to tax. The chief issue was a bill making all the judges in municipalities elective. Under previous legislation there are 26 municipal judges who are elected to office. By this bill it was proposed to increase the elective judges from 26 to 66 in number, and at the same time to abolish the justices of the peace. The change was objected to on the ground that the election of municipal judges had already interfered with the efficient and impartial administration of justice, had made the judges all of one political faith and mere political instruments in the hands of the central committee of the Unionist or dominant party. The attitude of the Executive Council in refusing to pass these bills led the House of Delegates to refuse to pass the necessary appropriation bills.

The facts recited demonstrate the willingness of the representatives of the people in the House of Delegates to subvert the government in order to secure the passage of certain legislation. The question whether

the proposed legislation should be enacted into law was left by the fundamental act to the joint action of the Executive Council and the House of Delegates as the legislative assembly. The House of Delegates proposes itself to secure this legislation without respect to the opposition of the Executive Council, or else to pull down the whole government. This spirit, which has been growing from year to year in Porto Rico, shows that too great power has been vested in the House of Delegates and that its members are not sufficiently alive to their oath-taken responsibility, for the maintenance of the government, to justify Congress in further reposing in them absolute power to withhold appropriations necessary for the government's life.

For these reasons I recommend an amendment to the Foraker Act providing that whenever the legislative assembly shall adjourn without making the appropriations necessary to carry on the government, sums equal to the appropriations made in the previous year for the respective purposes shall be available from the current revenues and shall be drawn by the warrant of the auditor on the treasurer and countersigned by the

governor. Such a provision applies to the legislatures of the Philippines and Hawaii, and it has prevented in those two countries any misuse of the power of appropriation.

The House of Delegates sent a committee of three to Washington, while the Executive Council was represented by the secretary and a committee consisting of the attorney-general and the auditor. I referred both committees to the secretary of the interior, whose report, with a letter from Governor Post, and the written statements of both committees, accompany this message.

I have had one personal interview with the committee representing the House of Delegates and suggested to them that if the House of Delegates would pass the appropriation bill without insisting upon the passage of the other bills by the Executive Council, I would send a representative of the government to Porto Rico to make an investigation and report in respect to the proposed legislation. Their answer, which shows them not to be in a compromising mood, was as follows :

“If the legislative assembly of Porto Rico would be called to an extraordinary session exclusively to pass an appropriation bill, taking into consideration

the state of affairs down the island and the high dissatisfaction produced by the intolerant attitude of the Executive Council, and also taking into consideration the absolute resistance of the House to do any act against its own dignity and the dignity of the country, it is the opinion of these commissioners that no agreement would be attained unless the Council feel disposed to accept the amendments of the House of Delegates.

"However, if in the proclamation calling for an extraordinary session the judicial and municipal reforms would be mentioned, and if the Executive Council would accept that the present justices of the peace be abolished and municipal judges created in every municipality, and that vacancies occurring in mayorships and judgeships be filled by the municipal councils, as provided in the so-called 'municipal bills' passed by the House in its last session, then the commissioners believe that the appropriation bills will be passed in the House as introduced in the council without delay."

Porto Rico has been the favored daughter of the United States. The sovereignty of the island in 1899 passed to the United States with the full consent of the people of the island.

Under the law all the customs and internal revenue taxes are turned into the treasury of Porto Rico for the maintenance of the island government, while the United States pays out of its own treasury the cost of the local army—that is, a full Porto

Rican regiment—the revenue vessels, the lighthouse service, the coast surveys, the harbor improvements, the marine hospital support, the post office deficit, the weather bureau, and the upkeep of the agricultural experiment stations.

Very soon after the change of sovereignty a cyclone destroyed a large part of Porto Rican coffee culture; \$200,000 was expended from the United States treasury to buy rations for those left in distress. The island is policed by 700 men, and complete tranquility reigns.

Before American control 87 per cent of the Porto Ricans were unable to read or write, and there was not in this island, containing a million people, a single building constructed for public instruction, while the enrollment of pupils in such schools as there were, 551 in number, was but 21,000. To-day in the island there are 160 such buildings, and the enrollment of pupils in 2,400 schools has reached the number of 87,000. The year before American sovereignty there was expended \$35,000 in gold for public education. Under the present government there is expended for this purpose a total of a million dollars a year.

When the Americans took control there were 172 miles of macadamized road. Since then there have been constructed 452 miles more, mostly in the mountains, making in all now a total of 624 miles of finely planned and admirably constructed macadamized roads—as good roads as there are in the world.

In the course of the administration of this island, the United States medical authorities discovered a disease of tropical anæmia which was epidemic and was produced by a microbe called the “hook worm.” It so much impaired the energy of those who suffered from it, and so often led to complete prostration and death, that it became necessary to undertake its cure by widespread governmental effort. I am glad to say that 225,000 natives, or one fourth of the entire population, have been treated at government expense, and the effect has been much to reduce the extent and severity of the disease and to bring it under control. Substantially every person in the island has been vaccinated and smallpox has practically disappeared.

There is complete free trade between Porto Rico and the United States, and all

customs duties collected in the United States on Porto Rican products subsequent to the date of Spanish evacuation, amounting to nearly \$3,000,000, have been refunded to the island treasury. The loss to the revenues of the United States from the free admission of Porto Rican products is \$15,000,000 annually. The wealth of the island is directly dependent upon the cultivation of the soil, to cane, tobacco, coffee, and fruit, for which we in America provide the market. Without our fostering benevolence the business of Porto Rico would be as prostrate as are some of the neighboring West Indian islands. Before American control the trade balance against the island was over \$12,500,000, while the present balance of trade in favor of the island is \$2,500,000. The total of exports and imports has increased from about \$22,000,000 before American sovereignty to \$56,000,000 at the present day. At the date of the American occupation the estimated value of all agricultural land was about \$30,000,000. Now the appraised value of the real property in the island reaches \$100,000,000. The expenses of government before American control were \$2,969,000, while the receipts were

\$3,644,000. For the year 1906 the receipts were \$4,250,000, and the expenditures were \$4,084,000. Of the civil servants in the central government, 343 are Americans and 2,548 are native Porto Ricans. There never was a time in the history of the island when the average prosperity of the Porto Rican has been higher, when his opportunity has been greater, when his liberty of thought and action was more secure.

Representatives of the House of Delegates insist in their appeals to Congress and to the public that from the standpoint of a free people the Porto Ricans are now subjected under American control to political oppression and to a much less liberal government than under that of Spain. To prove this they refer to the provisions of a royal decree of 1897, promulgated in November of that year. The decree related to the government of Porto Rico and Cuba and was undoubtedly a great step forward in granting a certain sort of autonomy to the people of the two islands. The war followed within a few months after its promulgation, and it is impossible to say what its practical operation would have been. It was a tentative arrangement, revocable at the pleasure of the Crown, and had,

in its provisions, authority for the governor-general to suspend all of the laws of the legislature of the island until approved or disapproved at home, and to suspend at will all constitutional guarantees of life, liberty, and property, supposed to be the basis of civil liberty and free institutions. The insular legislature had no power to enact new laws or to amend existing laws governing property rights or the life and liberty of the people. The jurisdiction to pass these remained in the hands of the National Cortes and included the mass of code laws governing the descent and distribution and transfer of property and contracts, and torts, land laws, notarial laws, laws of waters and mines, penal statutes, civil, criminal, and administrative procedure, organic laws of the municipalities, election laws, the code of commerce, etc.

In contrast with this, under its present form of government the island legislature possesses practically all the powers of an American commonwealth, and the constitutional guarantees of its inhabitants, instead of being subject to suspension by executive discretion, are absolutely guaranteed by act of Congress. The great body of substantive

law now in force in the island—political, civil, and criminal code, codes of political, civil, and criminal procedure, the revenue, municipal, electoral, franchise, educational, police, and public works laws, and the like—has been enacted by the people of the island themselves, as no law can be put upon the statute books unless it has received the approval of the representative lower house of the legislature. In no single case has the Congress of the United States intervened to annul or control acts of the legislative assembly. For the first time in the history of Porto Rico the island is living under laws enacted by its own legislature.

It is idle, however, to compare political power of the Porto Ricans under the royal decree of 1897, when their capacity to exercise it with benefit to themselves was never in fact tested, with that which they have under the Foraker Act. The question we have before us is whether their course since the adoption of the Foraker Act does not show the necessity for withholding from them the absolute power given by that act to the legislative assembly over appropriations, when the House of Delegates, as a coördinate branch of that assembly, shows itself willing

and anxious to use such absolute power, not to support and maintain the government, but to render it helpless. If the Porto Ricans desire a change in the form of the Foraker Act, this is a matter of congressional consideration dependent on the effect of such a change on the real political progress in the island.

Such a change should be sought in an orderly way and not brought to the attention of Congress by paralyzing the arm of the existing government. I do not doubt that the terms of the existing fundamental act might be improved, certainly in qualifying some of its provisions as to the respective jurisdictions of the Executive Council and the legislative assembly; and I suggest to Congress the wisdom of submitting to the appropriate committees this question of revision. But no action of this kind should be begun until after, by special amendment of the Foraker Act, the absolute power of appropriation is taken away from those who have shown themselves too irresponsible to enjoy it.

In the desire of certain of their leaders for political power Porto Ricans have forgotten the generosity of the United States in its

dealings with them. This should not be an occasion for surprise, nor in dealing with a whole people can it be made the basis of a charge of ingratitude. When we, with the consent of the people of Porto Rico, assumed guardianship over them and the guidance of their destinies, we must have been conscious that a people that had enjoyed so little opportunity for education could not be expected safely for themselves to exercise the full power of self-government; and the present development is only an indication that we have gone somewhat too fast in the extension of political power to them for their own good.

The change recommended may not immediately convince those controlling the House of Delegates of the mistake they have made in the extremity to which they have been willing to resort for political purposes, but in the long run it will secure more careful and responsible exercise of the power they have.

There is not the slightest evidence that there has been on the part of the governor or of any member of the Executive Council a disposition to usurp authority, or to withhold approval of such legislation as was for

the best interests of the island, or a lack of sympathy with the best aspirations of the Porto Rican people.

WM. H. TAFT.

The White House, May 10, 1909.

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